

6,000 prisoners launch hunger strike

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — Six thousand Palestinian prisoners announced they were going on an indefinite hunger strike from Tuesday in protest at the way the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leadership has "abandoned" them. The prisoners put out a statement proclaiming "no peace without unconditional release." They called for Palestinians to hold sit-ins outside Red Cross offices and for a hunger strike outside the new Palestinian National Authority in the self-rule enclave of Jericho. A second statement signed by jailed members of Yasser Arafat's Fatah movement urged a boycott of celebrations planned to mark the return of the PLO chairman to the autonomous areas, expected at the end of June or in early July. "It is amazing that the statement said, referring to his quest for cash from donor countries to operate autonomy, Israel says it has released some 4,000 of the 5,000 Palestinian prisoners it agreed to free under the May 4 self-rule deal. The remainder refused to agree to pledge in end violence or to serve out their sentences in Gaza or Jericho in line with the autonomy agreement, according to the army.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الاردنية الراي.

Palestinian police threaten journalists

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — The Palestinian police on Monday threatened that journalists critical of the self-rule authority would be silenced. "Those reporters who draw out their pens and spew their venom are leading the people astray and they must be silenced," said an open letter Monday signed by the public relations department of the Jericho police. "The rudeness in some local papers, which makes us ashamed to call them Palestinian papers, has forced us to respond," said the statement published across a quarter page in Al Nahar daily. It sent a chill through the journalistic community, which hoped that autonomy would bring an end to the widespread censorship experienced under the Israeli occupation. "We are working in a minefield. It is difficult for us to appease the opposition and not irritate the police," said Maher Alami, an editor at Al Quds daily for more than two decades. The paper's administration suspended publication of his column called "Concerns" which focused on current events from a man-on-the-street perspective. Editors said that they had also been told that they could not publish any articles describing what was being done to censor the copy.

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King, Christopher hold talks, hope for progress in all tracks

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter with agency dispatches

HIS MAJESTY King Hussein on Monday held talks with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher and said he was very pleased with the progress achieved in the Jordanian-Israeli tracks of negotiations and expressed hope that the other tracks in the Arab-Israeli peace process would also achieve similar progress.

The King, speaking at the State Department, also paid tribute to the U.S. efforts that went to advancing the negotiations.

"We are indeed optimistic as far as the future is concerned in our quest for a just, durable and comprehensive peace," the King told reporters. "We are very happy indeed that on the Jordanian-Israeli track we are about to begin to address the problems that were part of the agenda worked out earlier and beginning with border demarcation, delineation. We appreciate certainly the role of our friends in supporting us and our efforts to arrive at this point."

The King was asked whether Jordan would sign a peace accord with Israel without waiting for Syria. The

King replied, "we hope to see better support. But regarding us, we follow the Jordanian dimensions of the problem which we have started together from the same point... and as our brethren in Syria are negotiating, we are negotiating at the same time."

Asked if Jordan would sign a peace treaty with Israel if the Kingdom and the Jewish state could reach one before Syria and Lebanon did, the King said:

"It is a difficult question, and I would like to say that Jordan is practising its sovereignty and is dealing with its causes and the way to finding a solution to them. I hope that progress would take place on all other tracks to achieve comprehensive peace."

Asked whether he had recently met with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in London as suggested in some reports, the King said: "I do not confirm or deny such news."

At another point the King said, "I've never been afraid of daylight" and "the opportunity will come sometime soon for a meeting between Israeli and Jordanian officials."

Mr. Christopher said he planned to make another

swing through the Middle East in the coming months to help push forward the peace process.

"I will be probably going to the Middle East sometime before the summer is out. I expect to be going sometime in a relative near future," he said before a lunch with King Hussein.

Mr. Christopher congratulated King Hussein for making "very real progress" in negotiations with Israel and said his discussions with the Monarch would focus on Jordan's defence needs and its economic situation.

The U.S. chief diplomat said the United States intended to press its efforts to achieve an overall peace, adding that he was "not at all discouraged" by the negotiations between Israel and Syria.

"Both countries seem to be serious with the discussions," Mr. Christopher said. "I would expect that before the summer is out, we'll see some progress being made."

Mr. Christopher's last trip to the Middle East was in April and May when he shuttled to help mediate the negotiations between Israel and Syria.

"I am not pessimistic at all with the possibility of achiev-

ing some peace... I totally agree with His Majesty King Hussein that it is necessary to achieve peace in a comprehensive framework and I expect that progress would be achieved on all tracks," Mr. Christopher said.

The King met with Mr. Christopher for almost half an hour, followed by a working lunch attended by representatives of both sides.

On the Jordanian side the talks were attended by Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, Royal Court Chief Sharif Zaid Ben Shaker, the King's Political Advisor Marwan Al Qassem, the King's Military Secretary Prince Talal Ben Mohammad, Information Minister Jawad Al Anani, Finance Minister Sami Gam-moh and Jordan's Ambassador in Washington Fayez Tarawneh.

On the American side the talks were attended by Assistant Secretary of State for Near East Affairs Robert Pelletreau, United States Information Agency (USIA) Director Joseph Davy, National Security Advisor Martin Indyk, Middle East coordinator Dennis Ross and other officials.

The King and the delegation later held talks with Commerce Secretary Ron Brown.



WAR DAMAGE: Two Yemeni girls look at damages in a school situated in the Sheikh Othman area of Aden on Monday following shelling by North Yemeni forces during the night (see story below) (AFP photo)

Jordan pledges help to develop Palestinian educational sector

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, on Monday underlined the importance of maintaining the strongest possible ties between the people of Jordan and Palestine in the educational and social fields.

"I would like to reaffirm and reiterate His Majesty King Hussein's concern for supporting the Palestinian people and maintaining the strongest ties between the two sides in educational and social fields," the Regent said at a meeting with the Palestinian Higher Education Council at the Royal Court.

In his meetings with Palestinian President Yasser Arafat and Palestinian officials King Hussein has stressed Jordan's sense of serious responsibility for helping the Palestinian people attain their national objectives, the Regent said.

Prince Hassan referred to a conference by the United Nations World and Relief Agency (UNRWA) held in Amman on June 1 and 2, which, he said, aimed at helping the Palestinian people restore and improve social and educational services.

The Regent expressed satisfaction with the help being provided by U.N. agencies to the Palestinians, noting that the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) had been talking about income-generating projects for the Palestinians.

He also referred to a recent agreement between the Palestinians and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).

But he stressed the need for such cooperation with various agencies to fall within the framework of a plan agreed on with Arab states in advance that Arab and Islamic principles should be safeguarded.

The Regent pledged Jordan's willingness to deepen the cooperation with the Palestinians in all social and educational fields.

Speaking at the outset of the meeting, Yasser Amer, the Palestinian minister in charge of higher education, emphasised that the Palestine Higher Education Department considers itself as an extension to the Jordanian Ministry of Education.

The Ministry of Education

in Jordan was instrumental in helping to set up the Palestinian Higher Educational Department and a great number of teachers at Jordanian universities head different sections in this department, Mr. Amer said.

"We will continue to maintain this cooperation and coordinate our policies pertaining to educational matters in Palestine and Jordan," he added.

In the occupied territories, he said, "we will face a challenge from the Israeli society and we seek to build and strengthen our educational infrastructure to confront this challenge. We plan to do so through those cooperation with Jordan and other Arab

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ing a report in October related to a State Security Court trial of 10 people accused of plotting to assassinate His Majesty King Hussein.

The ruling was the culmination of a 4-week trial in which the Jordan Times stood accused of violating Articles 40/A/2 and 42 of the law, which was passed by the 11th Parliament and came into effect in the middle of 1993.

The first article stipulates that publications are forbidden to print "news items, drawings or commentaries disparaging the Armed Forces or the security apparatus."

Article 42 forbids "publishing transcripts of any case before the final verdict, except with court permission."

"Both journalists had pleaded not guilty to the charges.

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Court of Appeals has upheld sentences passed on the chief editor of the Jordan Times, George Hawatmeh, and reporter Sana Atiyeh, by the Court of First Instance which convicted them of violating the press and publications law.

Lawyer Ibrahim Bakr said he intended to seek permission from the Ministry of Justice or the chief prosecutor general to file an appeal at the Court of Cassation. A ruling by the court of appeals needs such a permission before it could be reviewed at a higher court, he said.

In its May 16 verdict, the Court of First Instance ordered Mr. Hawatmeh and Ms. Atiyeh to pay JD300 each fine and court costs for car-

ment," Dr. Shaath angrily told reporters after troops at a roadblock forced his car to turn back.

A spokesman for Mr. Rabin said he would have to check on the charges before commenting.

Dr. Shaath, a member of the Palestinian authority, had been living in Egypt until last week when he arrived to take up permanent residence in the self-ruled area of Gaza.

He also complained Israeli soldiers were forcing Palestinian farmers to wait for hours at a checkpoint separating Jericho from the village of Ojja, both within the West Bank self-ruled area.

Dr. Shaath postponed a visit to east Jerusalem on Monday for what another Palestinian negotiator said

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Another key topic was how

Yemeni fighting rages after truce bid fails

Combined agency dispatches

NORTHERN TROOPS stepped up attempts to capture the southern stronghold of Aden on Monday after U.N. efforts to broker a ceasefire collapsed.

Fighting raged on battlefronts around the city throughout Monday, killing two southern fighters and wounding seven more, according to a military source.

U.N. special envoy Lakhdar Brahimi said in Cairo after a failed mediation mission that he would not recommend sanctions against the warring sides, saying peace efforts would continue.

The northern Yemeni government gave Mr. Brahimi new ideas on a ceasefire but a southern Yemeni delegation left Cairo for North Africa saying their rivals were just wasting time.

Mr. Brahimi tried on Sunday to bring the northerners and southerners together for the first direct talks since war

broke out in Yemen on May 4 but he eventually gave up and decided to fly back to New York to report to the U.N. secretary-general.

He said on Monday morning that both sides agreed that a ceasefire was needed but that they could not agree on a mechanism for making sure it would last.

The northern Yemeni delegation met Mr. Brahimi again on Monday afternoon and one of the members, Ahmad Al Iryani, told Reuters they submitted new proposals on how to monitor a truce.

He said the proposals were "within the framework of reviving the joint military commission" but declined to go into details.

The two sides disagree on how to set up a ceasefire mechanism, with the south insisting on international observers and the north pressing for a joint Yemeni military commission set up before the war to be reactivated.

Mr. Ibrahim said: "There are two things everyone agrees on, including the warring parties — the need for a ceasefire and for dialogue to find a solution."

"But above all else we need a ceasefire. We have to set up a mechanism to monitor it and then we can start talking."

But he said peace efforts would continue, and said he would not recommend sanctions against the warring sides. "We are not at that stage yet, we are searching for a solution and we will continue our efforts," he told reporters as he left Cairo for New York.

Esmaat Abdul Meguid, secretary general of the Arab League, said after talks with Mr. Ibrahim on Monday: "A solution to the Yemeni crisis is emerging on the horizon."

President Ali Abdullah Saleh, the northern leader, has threatened to storm Aden.

Clinton cautious on Korea

WASHINGTON (R) —

President Bill Clinton said Monday there are "hopeful signs" a clash over North Korea's nuclear programme can be averted, but cautioned that Pyongyang's offer to freeze the programme had to be verified.

It was Mr. Clinton's first public comment on the situation since former President Jimmy Carter returned from a private visit to North Korea with a set of understandings designed to ease suspicions about the North's nuclear ambitions.

Mr. Carter said after briefing White House aides Sunday that he thought the crisis was over, but Mr. Clinton was clearly more wary.

"There are some hopeful signs... but the critical question is: Are they willing to freeze this nuclear programme?" the president said in an interview on NBC's "Today" show.

"If it's going to be frozen, then clearly that is ground for talking, but we have to know what the facts are so we'll be attempting to determine that."

Mr. Carter briefed top Clinton administration officials Sunday upon return from a private visit to North

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3 Israeli soldiers killed in South Lebanon flare-up

MARJAYOUN, Lebanon (Agencies) — Three Israeli soldiers were killed in South Lebanon on Monday when resistance force ambushed their patrol after Israeli air raids, security sources said.

Israeli shelling killed a 65-year-old woman and wounded three civilians, the sources said.

They said three soldiers were wounded in the ambush, one of them badly, and an armoured personnel carrier was destroyed when guerrillas fired rockets and mortars at the patrol near Beaufort Castle on the edge of the Israeli occupation zone.

It was the bloodiest attack against Israeli forces in South Lebanon since Feb. 7 when Hizbollah (Party of God) fighters killed four Israeli soldiers and wounded five in a clash. One guerrilla was killed in the duels then.

Also on Monday the guerrillas fired mortar bombs and rockets at Israeli troops and allied South Lebanon Army (SLA) militiamen manning

posts on nearby Ali Taher hill, the sources said.

Israeli and SLA forces fired dozens of heavy artillery shells at villages to the north, killing an elderly woman and wounding three other civilians in Kfar Tibnit. The shelling caused several fires in wheat fields.

The Islamic Resistance, Hizbollah's military arm, claimed responsibility for the attack on the Israeli patrol saying several soldiers were killed and many vehicles were destroyed.

The guerrillas struck shortly after Israeli planes rocketed Hizbollah outposts in southeastern Lebanon — the most explosive frontline in the Arab-Israeli conflict. Peace talks between Lebanon and Israel have made little progress.

The sources said Israel — maintaining a recent escalation of air raids into Lebanon — sent warplanes to blast Hizbollah positions in hills near Maydon on the southern edge of the western Be-kaa Valley from where the

fighters launch attacks against the eastern sector of the Israeli-held zone.

Israeli military sources said anonymously that only one Israeli soldier was killed and four were wounded. The discrepancy in the figures could not be immediately resolved.

The Lebanese sources said a Lebanese woman was killed and five other Lebanese, including two guerrillas, were wounded in the Israeli air strikes and ensuing artillery battles.

Massive artillery and rocket duels raged along the northern fringes of the enclave after the ambush, pitting Israeli troops and SLA militiamen against Hizbollah's guerrillas.

Two guerrillas and two civilians, a man and a woman, were wounded in the two Israeli air raids on Hizbollah strongholds. The woman, Khadija Bishir, 66, later died in hospital.

Hizbollah positions lobbed at least 12 Katyusha rockets into the occupied enclave after the air strikes,

Chopra: Jordanian potential high in W. Bank, Gaza

By P.V. Vivekanand Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The World Bank believes Jordan stands to benefit considerably from the development of the Palestinian economy in the West Bank and Gaza Strip since the Kingdom could offer key ingredients to the economic process that has been launched with the beginning of Palestinian self-rule, a senior World Bank official said Monday.

It was the first comment of an international official of that stature that Jordan was seen as a potentially important partner in building Palestinian infrastructure. It also implied that the World Bank, which is coordinating up to \$2.2 billion in international aid to the Palestinians, might even have such a role carved out for Jordan.

Ram Chopra, head of the Middle East (Al Mashreq) division of the World Bank, also said that private-sector-led growth in exports and development of human resources were two key steps that should see Jordan address its economic problems and achieve self-reliance.

"Given its proximity to the West Bank and Gaza, (Jordan) potentially can gain from the investments that we expect to happen, given the large aid flows that are coming to the West Bank and Gaza," Mr. Chopra said in an interview. "Given the skill levels that are present in Jordan, (Jordanians) could participate, advise and help the West Bank and Gaza people in their development programmes," the World Bank official said.

Another key area where

Jordan could benefit from the international aid to the Palestinians is the actual building of infrastructure projects in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

"Given the contracting and the sub-contracting facilities available here I am sure Jordan could participate in some of the projects that are going to be done in the West Bank and Gaza as a result of the large aid programmes that are being implemented," Mr. Chopra said.

Asked whether this meant that the World Bank was considering the aid flow to the Palestinians as an "indirect" means of help to Jordan, Mr. Chopra said: "Yes, that is one of the U.N. recommendations. That is exactly that."

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, met with Mr. Chopra on Sun-

day for a review of World Bank programmes in Jordan and related issues as well as the economic impact of the peace process on the Kingdom.

Describing relations between Jordan and the World Bank as the best in the region, Mr. Chopra said he and the Regent discussed "the programmes that we should have between Jordan and the World Bank for the next three or four years."

"We had full understanding about the kind of priorities that we should have in Jordan, which include looking at encouraging the private sector-led, export-led growth," he said. Other bilateral issues covered during the meeting, he said, included developing human resources and environmental issues.

Another key topic was how

the developments in the peace process would affect the Jordanian economy, particularly that the Jordanian dinar is in circulation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

"We are working together, at their request, to consider what are the implications of the regional peace process on the Jordanian economy, and how in our bilateral programmes we can work with the government of Jordan to benefit from the situation in the Middle East," Mr. Chopra said.

On the other side, given that there are so many challenges and risks involved for the Jordanian economy, how to assist the government of Jordan to try and minimise those risks," said the World Bank official.

While Mr. Chopra did not

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Nashashibi to set up operations in month

JERICHO (R) — The man responsible for running Palestinian self-rule finances has returned to the West Bank for the first time in 28 years and vowed to have finance and tax departments up and running within a month.

Mohammad Nashashibi holds the finance portfolio in the Palestinian authority and is the first member of the Palestine Liberation Organisation's (PLO) Executive Committee to return under the peace deal with Israel.

"The purpose of my visit is to set up my ministry and get it running efficiently. This is the most important department," he told reporters at a relative's house in Jericho where he was greeted by well-wishers.

"I think it will take a maximum one month," Mr. Nashashibi, a 68-year-old former bank manager, will be in charge of raising taxes and arranging finances for the Palestinian self-rule administration which began last month in Gaza and Jericho.

Palestinian self-rule in its first few weeks has been hampered by a critical shortage of funds. Policemen and civil servants have been paid until the end of June but it is not clear what will happen after that.

Many offices inherited from the Israeli-run civil administration are not running at full strength and other new offices Palestinians have announced they are setting up so far remain on paper.

Mr. Nashashibi said none of the \$42 million urgent aid promised by donors at a World Bank month conference in Paris this month had arrived in the PLO's coffers. The PLO says it desperately needs the money for running costs.

Many Israelis and Palestinians say the self-rule administration needs to show rapid economic benefits to the population in Gaza and Jericho to win their support. But Mr. Nashashibi said the money issue had been overplayed.

"We are struggling for 50 years and money never was a burning issue, and it is not a burning issue now. We will get the money sooner or later," he said.

Mr. Nashashibi said the PLO was seriously considering a proposal by the International Monetary Fund to allow private banks and the post office to collect revenues for the authority, taking a commission. The civil administration used a similar system.

"We have to choose the right banks, with a good reputation and we are considering this now," he said. His first priority, he said, was to fill the 350 positions out of about 600 in the finance and customs departments of the former civil administration that had been occupied by Israelis.

Mr. Nashashibi, who comes from a prominent East Jerusalem family, left the West Bank in 1966 and has since lived in Lebanon, Syria and Jordan.

Abdul Rahim hails Jordan-Israel progress

AMMAN (Petra) — The Palestinian ambassador to Jordan Al Tayeb Abdul Rahim, on Monday welcomed the progress achieved along the Jordanian-Israeli track of the Arab-Israeli peace process and stressed that the achievement in no way contradicts Jordan's commitment to coordination with the other Arab parties.

Mr. Abdul Rahim, who has been appointed as minister of the Palestine National Authority's presidency affairs, said progress along the Jordanian-Israeli track constitutes support for the Palestinians and backs any progress along all the other Arab-Israeli tracks.

Denying that progress

along any one track could lead to Israel reaching separate treaties with the Arab states, Mr. Abdul Rahim said that each of the Arab parties involved in the peace process seeks a lasting and just solution and they are in agreement that there can be no final treaty before all outstanding issues along all tracks have been settled.

"We welcome the progress achieved on the Jordanian-Israeli track and we consider it as an achievement because it aims at regaining Arab lands and waters," Mr. Abdul Rahim said. "Progress along any one track should not frighten any other Arab party. On the contrary such progress can be conducive to

achieving further advances along the other tracks."

Thanking Jordan for its help to the Palestinian people, he said that the Kingdom had been a "brother to Palestine and the Palestinian people and this was clearly manifested during all the negotiation sessions with Israel."

He said that the Palestine National Authority and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) should deepen their relations with the Arab World, particularly with Jordan and Egypt in the economic fields so that the Palestinian economic infrastructure can be based on firm ground.

Stressing that coordination with all Arab parties will

continue, the ambassador urged Arab countries to extend full backing to Syria and its demand for a complete end to the Israeli occupation of the Golan Heights in exchange for peace.

Referring to the delay in the signing of the Palestinian-Jordanian economic accord, the ambassador said the Palestinians were seeking an appropriate mechanism for the implementation of the agreement reached in January, "especially now that we have secured substantial gains through the Palestinian-Israeli economic agreement which had not been taken into account" when Jordan and the PLO reached the January accord.

Million Jews would bar Arafat — Olmert

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Israel's Jewish mayor of Jerusalem, Ehud Olmert, vowed on Monday to muster a million people to confront Yasser Arafat should the Palestinian leader try to visit the Holy City.

But Mr. Olmert, of the opposition Likud Party, said he disapproved of a reported comment by his deputy last month offering the city's top award to anyone who would kill Mr. Arafat.

"I don't like what he said and I said it in the harshest possible terms and he will never repeat it again," said the mayor, six-and-a-half months on the job.

Mr. Olmert said his own threat of confrontation had so far deterred Prime Minister

Yitzhak Rabin's government from letting Mr. Arafat visit Jerusalem's third holiest site known as Haram Al Sharif.

But if the government changed its mind and allowed Mr. Arafat to visit Jerusalem sites, Mr. Olmert told Reuters, "we will bring in a million people to Jerusalem."

He said they would stand behind the walls of the Old City to keep Mr. Arafat out. Israeli hardliners oppose letting Mr. Arafat include Jerusalem on an expected tour as early as this month that will include the areas of Gaza and Jericho that Israel turned over to Palestinian self-rule in May.

"This is a very stupid idea to allow Arafat to come and

visit Israel, Jerusalem, the Temple Mount" — first and foremost the Temple Mount. Jerusalem is such a sensitive place. It is so complex. It is so volatile," Mr. Olmert said.

Mr. Olmert wrote to Mr. Rabin on Sunday urging that Nabil Shaath, Mr. Arafat's chief negotiator in peace talks with Israel, also be prevented from entering Jerusalem for fear of endangering the city's security.

Dr. Shaath, the second highest ranking Palestinian Liberation Organisation PLO official to enter the self-rule areas so far, put off a trip to Arab East Jerusalem planned for Monday until at least next week.

Another Palestinian negotiator cited "internal Palesti-

nian reasons" for Dr. Shaath's postponement, but on Sunday Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said Dr. Shaath had not coordinated it with Israeli authorities as would be required.

Mr. Olmert also assailed Mr. Arafat's remarks last month calling for jihad — a holy war — for Jerusalem. Mr. Olmert rejected Mr. Arafat's contention later that he meant by jihad only a peaceful crusade.

"The holy meaning of jihad is a holy war, which is the only possible interpretation for the use of these words when it comes to Jews," said Mr. Olmert, who ousted longtime mayor Teddy Kollek in a hard-fought race last November.

Afghan peace talks slightly delayed

KABUL (AFP) — A meeting of special peace delegations from rival Afghan faction leaders President Burhanuddin Rabbani and Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar has been postponed by one day, an official mediator said Monday.

"Everything is finalised for Tuesday," said Jalil Shams, who is also deputy foreign minister.

Mr. Shams, who returned to Kabul Monday after a meeting with Mr. Hekmatyar at the prime minister's Charsabat headquarters east of the capital, said the proposed Monday meeting had been delayed because the delegations had not been ready in time.

"The composition of the delegations was not complete and some of the delegates were not yet in the country," he explained.

He said he was hopeful the meeting — scheduled at the headquarters of Hekmatyar's Shiite ally, Hezb-e-Islami faction leader Abdul Ali Mazari — would begin Tuesday on time.

Mr. Shams said the first item on the agenda would be a declaration of a ceasefire and the lifting of all blockades on national highways.

"The ceasefire will be valid till the end of June. If the negotiations are successful then it will be extended," Mr. Shams declared.

Mr. Hekmatyar expects Mr. Rabbani to resign at the end of June in accordance with earlier peace accords but spokesmen for the Afghan president have repeatedly stated that Mr. Rabbani will only surrender his authority to a national assembly.

Such an assembly is expected to be convened in the western provincial capital of Herat, but not for several months.

The possibility of renewed hostilities at the end of June cannot be ruled out if Tuesday's talks here bog down. The Kabul meetings are described as "preliminary" before the larger Herat conference to which all faction leaders have been invited.

It is not yet clear if Mr. Hekmatyar's ally, ex-communist General Abdul Rashid Dostum, will be invited to Herat.

There was a heavy exchange of shelling in the capital late Sunday but the city was calm Monday, although in the south around the Darulaman Palace there was tension between opposing factions who have clashed daily for the last five days.

The pro-Rabbani Shiite Harakat-e-Islami faction fought with elements of Mr. Hekmatyar's Hezb-e-Islami faction at Darulaman late Sunday and a nearby base was seen still burning late Monday.

A day of battles between rival Afghan parties over stolen jeeps killed one person and injured 20 on Sunday. Fierce exchanges of heavy machinegun fire, rockets and shelling raged throughout the day between the forces of Mr. Hekmatyar and guerrillas of the Harakat-e-Islami, witnesses said.

More than 20 people have been killed and dozens injured since the latest clash in the war-shattered city erupted on Thursday, when each side accused the other of stealing vehicles.

Turkey apprehensive of Russian designs

ANKARA (AP) — Turkey watched the collapse of its giant Soviet neighbour to the north with relief three years ago. But the feeling did not last.

Fear of Russian nationalism, unrest in the Caucasus and the spread of ethnic violence close to its borders again upset Turkey.

"If nationalist and expansionist policies to rebuild an empire prevail in Russia, it will be a threat for the whole world," Prime Minister Tansu Ciller said recently.

Last month, General Dogan Gures, the chief of staff, told the daily Sabah: "Russia became a serious danger. Today, there is a Russia which behaves with a czarist motivation."

The military retracted Gen. Gures's statement after the Russian Foreign Ministry protested.

After the Soviet collapse, Turkey was overjoyed with talk of its rise as a regional power as a result of a Western preference for its secular, democratic state over the

newly independent nations in central Asia and Azerbaijan, where 50 million people, most of Turkish origin, live. But Ankara could not pledge funding to its fellow predominantly Muslim republics.

Ambassador Umut Arik, who heads a Foreign Ministry agency overseeing relations with the Central Asian republics, talked last week in parliament about financial restraints with tears rolling down his cheeks.

Turkey educates 8,000 students from these countries but it is unclear whether they take home pro-Turkish views.

Russia already has a military presence in Georgia and is pushing for a similar arrangement in Armenia and Azerbaijan. Moscow also wants to increase its armour in the northern Caucasus.

"Our neighbour Russia gets increasingly closer," Alan Ozyges, the daily Milliyet's chief columnist, wrote. International experts feel Turkey is less threatening now to Russia, which joined the

North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) to counter the Soviet threat and was a staunch U.S. ally during the cold war.

"Russia is hardly a military threat to Turkey, but there will be frictions," said Alvin Z. Rubinstein, a political science professor at the University of Pennsylvania.

Ottoman Turks and the czarist Russia fought 13 wars in the 18th and 19th centuries. Relations improved after the Bolshevik Revolution and the founding of modern Turkey in 1923, but soured after World War II, when the Soviet Union demanded Turkish territory in the east and control over the Turkish Straits.

Turkey is also watching other former Soviet states, President Suleyman Demirel visited Ukraine last month to reaffirm Turkey's commitment to Ukraine's territorial integrity.

It has been carefully monitoring the attempts of a Russian majority in Crimea to join Russia. About 150,000 Turkish-speaking Crimean

Tatars are caught in the territorial tug-of-war between Russia and Ukraine.

Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev of Russia said in Istanbul last week during a NATO meeting that his country had second thoughts about new Turkish safety rules for passing through the Turkish straits, which Russia wants to use for oil shipments.

Ankara feels Moscow is delaying agreement on building an oil pipeline from Central Asia and Azerbaijan through Turkey to the Mediterranean Sea.

Turkey is hampered by Kurdish separatists seeking an independent homeland in the southeast. The government has been under fire from the West for its harsh military crackdown on the unrest.

Moscow is aware of Turkey's weakness. A Kurdish conference in Moscow in February brought together the Kurdish populations of the former Soviet Union as well as Turkey's Kurds, to Ankara's dismay.

Rabin accuses union leaders of weakening Labour

TEL AVIV (AP) — Hecklers nearly shouted Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin off the podium at a Labour Party meeting Sunday when he accused union leaders of encouraging a right-wing political comeback in Israel.

The dispute was over the party's failure to patch up quarrels which has lost it a crucial labour union election and threatens to undermine Mr. Rabin's authority at a critical juncture in Mideast peace efforts.

Angry central committee members drowned out much of Mr. Rabin's speech at a headquarters in a Tel Aviv suburb. He scolded them for sanctioning union coalitions talks with the rightist Likud Party, suggesting that a Likud foothold in the power-

ful Histadrut Labour Federation could help it win national elections in 1996.

"What are you trying to do, crown the Likud leader of the country? We put them in the opposition and that is why we have a peace process," Mr. Rabin said.

Mr. Rabin argued that his government had kept its promises, namely, by granting autonomy to Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and West Bank region of Jericho in mid-May, bringing "relative a relaxation in terrorism, and the people value this."

"Where did we go wrong? In the Histadrut," Mr. Rabin shouted, referring to the powerful labour federation that Labour controlled for decades before a May 10 electoral upset won by a

Labour breakaway, Haim Ramon.

Someone was heard shouting, "We have some complaints about you." And Mr. Rabin later left the hall in protest when a Tel Aviv Labour leader, Gershon Gelman, was given the floor.

Israeli commentators said it was the toughest show against Rabin in the party's governing body, since Mr. Rabin took over from Foreign Minister Shimon Peres as party leader in February 1992. Mr. Peres still has strong support in the central committee.

They speculated about a fresh flare up of a Rabin-Peres feud such as the one which led to Labour's historic electoral loss in 1977 to the

Likud. Likud dominated Israeli governments until 1992 when Mr. Rabin came to power. Mr. Rabin's election broke a lengthy stalemate in Israeli-Palestinian peace efforts, and led to the Sept. 13 Israeli-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) accord, which Likud opposes.

Relations between supporters of Mr. Rabin and Mr. Peres have been strained since Mr. Rabin named one of his camp, Ephraim Sneh, as health minister last month, over Mr. Peres's objections.

But Mr. Peres denied any new rivalry with Mr. Rabin. "I know the media is impatient to find out when this war will break out. I haven't declared it, and I won't," he said on Israel Television.

Army reveals home of Palestinian activist

TEL AVIV (AP) — Israeli soldiers sealed up the home of a Palestinian activist Sunday two days after it was broken open by demonstrators testing the limits of the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) peace accord.

The house in Izzariya, a West Bank town next to Jerusalem, belongs to the family of Samer Al Masri, 22. It was sealed five years ago when he went to prison for throwing stones at Israelis.

Mr. Masri, who was active with the PLO's mainstream Fatah movement, is out of jail after a four-year prison term. He is now a supporter of the Israel-PLO accord, and works in a pizzeria in a Jewish neighbourhood in Jerusalem.

Mubarak Awad, a Palestinian of Washington D.C., led a group that broke the seal on Friday to show that the continued seal on some 350 homes in the West Bank and East Jerusalem were an

obstacle to peacemaking. On Sunday, soldiers came back, clamped a curfew on the town and resealed the home, Israeli and Palestinian reports said.

Dr. Awad's Palestinian Centre for the Study of Non-Violence protested the resealed sealing in a statement as "a cruel form of punishment targeting the families and the children."

The army had no comment. But Israeli Radio quoted military sources as confirming the house was resealed and asserting it was up to the army to decide when a sealed home should be opened.

Since occupying the West Bank in the 1967 Mideast war, the army often punished Palestinians charged with violence by sealing their homes in addition to jailing them.

But the practice virtually ground to a halt in the wake of last September's peace accord, which led to autonomy for the Gaza Strip and West Bank area of Jericho.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Shaath invites Chirac to 'beautify' Gaza

JERICHO (AFP) — Senior Palestinian official Nabil Shaath said Monday he plans to invite Paris Mayor Jacques Chirac to the autonomous area of Gaza in an effort to "beautify" the place. "Paris is beautiful, we want to cooperate with France to also make Gaza beautiful," said Dr. Shaath, who holds the portfolio of minister of international cooperation in the new Palestinian Authority. He was speaking to reporters after a meeting with Jean De Glinasty, France's consul-general in East Jerusalem. Some 800,000 Palestinians are crowded into the Gaza Strip where the intifada against Israel exploded in December 1987 leading to a civil breakdown. Public services have largely collapsed, rubbish remains uncollected, many streets are potholed or just dust tracks and virtually every wall is daubed with graffiti. Some effort has been made to clean up Gaza City, but Palestinians acknowledge a lot remains to be done. Dr. Shaath said his talks with Mr. De Glinasty focused on French aid toward the cleaning up of Gaza. "I am thinking of contacting Jacques Chirac to come visit Gaza with French experts and remove all traces of the occupation," Dr. Shaath said.

Two civilians assassinated in Algeria

ALGIERS (AFP) — Two Algerian civilians were killed in eastern Algeria by unknown assailants, security services said Monday, taking to six the number of civilians gunned down in June by suspected Islamic fundamentalists. Mohammed Rouabah, 62, a member of the independence war's veterans' association, was killed near his home in Constantine on Saturday. Maalab Al Eulmi was shot dead in Batna on Friday, security services said, but gave no other details. The killings bring to six the number of civilians slain so far this month by suspected fundamentalist militants. Youssef Fatahal, president of the Algerian Human Rights league, was shot and killed in his Algiers office Saturday, following the deaths earlier of the rector of Bab Ezzouar University, Salah Djebali, chief of the government customs service Abdullah Moussouni and journalist Ferhat Cherkit.

Damascus Declaration to discuss Yemen

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Foreign ministers from Egypt, Syria and six Gulf Arab states will meet in Kuwait next week to discuss the civil war in Yemen, the official Emirates news agency WAM said on Monday. It said the war, which erupted between rival north and south forces on May 5, would top the agenda during talks by the ministers from the Damascus Declaration alliance at their ninth meeting from June 27 and 29. Egypt and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) have been actively involved in efforts to end the hostilities, which have led the south to declare independence four years after former North and South Yemen were merged. At talks in Riyadh earlier this month, GCC foreign ministers urged the warring parties to respect a U.N. call for a ceasefire in a communique which carried an implicit recognition of the southern breakaway state. But so far no country has officially recognised the Yemen Democratic Republic.

Bashir, U.S. envoy discuss Sudan peace

KHARTOUM (R) — Sudan's president Omar Hassan Al Bashir discussed the peace process in war-torn Sudan with U.S. envoy Melissa Wells during his visit last week, the official Sudan News Agency (SUNA) said on Monday. SUNA quoted General Bashir as telling his cabinet that Ms. Wells, envoy of U.S. President Bill Clinton, was informed of the government's efforts to achieve peace in Sudan. The government is fighting rebels in the south. Ms. Wells, who visited Khartoum and Kordofan state, also discussed relief assistance to the Sudanese. Ms. Wells, who met Gen. Bashir on June 13, has described her visit to Sudan as "constructive."

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 77311-19

PROGRAMME TWO

17:30 Envoy Special
18:30 News in French
18:45 Grand Gala
19:00 News in Hebrew
19:30 World Cup: Argentina vs Greece
20:00 Step by Step
21:30 Daily summary of football
22:00 News in English
23:00 World Cup: Germany vs Spain

PRAYER TIMES

05:50 Fajr
06:26 (Sunrise) Dhuhr
16:18 Asr
19:49 Maghrib
21:24 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Swithead, Tel. 810740
Assiout Church of St. George, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church, Tel. 624990
Church of the Annunciation, Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church, Tel. 661757
Terresanta Church, Tel. 622666
Church of the Annunciation, Tel. 623541
Assiout Church, Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543

Armenian Catholic Church

Tel. 77311-19

Armenian Orthodox Church

Tel. 77311-19

St. Ephraim Church

Tel. 77311-19

Armenian International Church

Tel. 632785

Evangelical Lutheran Church

Tel. 824328

German-speaking Evangelical

Church, Tel. 684195

The Church of Jesus Christ of

Latter-Day Saints, Tel. 654932

Church of Nazareth, Tel. 675691

The Evangelical Local Church in Amman, Tel. 811295.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Relative hot weather will prevail with winds northwesterly light to moderate. In Amman, it will be hot and winds will be northwesterly moderate and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp. 19/34

Amman 24/39

Agaba 21/36

Jordan Valley 21/39

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 32, Agaba 37. Humidity readings: Amman 36 per cent, Agaba 22 per cent.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Mohamed Alwan 752971

Dr. Ishtaki Abu Zaid 737962

Dr. Mohamed Nakhaw 819213

Dr. Jamal Marqat 776149

Firas pharmacy 661912

Rodney pharmacy 778336

Al Asma pharmacy 637055

Nadrouk pharmacy 636762

Al Salam pharmacy 636730

Yasoub pharmacy 649493

Sunshine pharmacy 637661

Nadrouk pharmacy 623672

Najih pharmacy 847632

BRID:

Dr. Akram Monani (-)

Alquds pharmacy (-)

Min./Max. temp. 19/34

Amman 24/39

Agaba 21/36

Jordan Valley 21/39

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 32, Agaba 37. Humidity readings: Amman 36 per cent, Agaba 22 per cent.

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 677111

Civil Defence Department

661111

Civil Defence Immediate

630341

Rescue Emergency

199

Rescue Police

192/21111, 637777

Fire Brigade

Home News

JORDAN TIMES, TUESDAY, JUNE 21, 1994 3

West Bank, Jericho follow Jordan's school curricula; Gaza uses Egypt's

AMMAN (Petra) — School curricula in the occupied West Bank, including the self-rule Jericho area will continue to follow the Jordanian educational curricula while schools in Gaza Strip will follow the Egyptian system, according to Yasser Amr, head of the Palestine Higher Educational Department of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

"But with help from the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), there will be a gradual reconciliation between the two systems," said Mr. Amr who has been appointed minister of higher education under the national Palestine authority.

In a statement Sunday, Mr. Amr said that the Palestinians are determined to erase the last traces of the Israeli occupation of over 27 years, and this can be achieved through an efficient educational system and in close cooperation with Jordan and Egypt.

Referring to the educational system in the occupied Arab lands, as run under the Israeli rule, Mr. Amr said that only 13 administrators were appointed to supervise the work of 22,000 teachers and 608,333 students in 1,500 schools.

This situation, coupled with Israel's repeated closure of schools over the past 27

years, clearly manifests Israel's disregard of the Palestinian people's right to education, said Mr. Amr.

"We want to retain the strongest possible ties with Jordan, and education is one of the fields in which we can achieve this end," added Mr. Amr.

Mr. Amr said his department has recently concluded agreements with UNESCO, under which the latter would finance and help carry out educational programmes in Palestinian lands, including educational radio broadcasts for students.

UNESCO has also agreed to set up a Palestinian centre for developing educational

curricula, to be financed by the Italian government, added Mr. Amr.

The department has been in contact with the commissioner general of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), the Arab League Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation, as well as the Islamic Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (ISESCO) to help implement Palestinian educational plans, added Mr. Amr.

Mr. Amr said the curricula of academic and vocational training in the West Bank and Gaza Strip is bound to be at the basis of the future of the Palestinian society.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

Minister, UPU official discuss cooperation

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Post and Communications Hashem Dabbas Monday held a meeting with Mohammad Balmaa, consultant on Arab affairs at the Universal Postal Union (UPU) and discussed UPU-Jordanian technical cooperation. Discussion also covered the agenda of the UPU conference due to be held in Seoul in August this year. Jordan will chair one of the conference's committees at the Seoul conference.

RJ pilots to train at Airbus in France

AMMAN (Petra) — As of the coming month Royal Jordanian (RJ), the national airline, will be sending some of its pilots to the Airbus company in France to help in the training of newly-recruited pilots serving on other airlines flying Airbus aircraft, according to an agreement reached between the Airbus company and RJ. Captain Jihad Irshaid, director of RJ's operations, said that the first two of RJ's pilots will be sent on the mission to France next month, to be followed by others later on. RJ owns three Airbus planes among its 16 aircraft.

Water network in Ramtha overhauled

RAMTHA (Petra) — The Water Authority has embarked on a project for modernising the water network in the Ramtha area at the cost of JD 3,850,630. According to Water Authority Department Director in Ramtha Yousef Hijjat, a total of 172,225 metres of pipes will undergo the modernisation process which entails replacing parts of the network with new pipes. The whole project will take 730 days to complete, said Mr. Hijjat.

Smuggling attempt foiled

AMMAN (Petra) — Customs officials have foiled an attempt to smuggle 10,650 cartons of foreign-made cigarettes into Jordan through the eastern badia region, according to an official at the Customs Department Monday. He said that a number of people involved in the smuggling operations have been apprehended following a long chase and will be referred to the Customs Court for trial. He said the cigarettes seized from the smugglers were estimated to be worth JD 192,000.

QAIA southern runway closed

AMMAN (Petra) — As of Monday, the southern runway of the Queen Alia International Airport will be closed for maintenance work, according to an announcement Sunday by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). The announcement said that maintenance work, to be carried out by a local Jordanian firm, will last until July 31. During the maintenance work, which will cost JD 69,982, all aircraft will be taking off and landing at the northern runway.

Old prison becomes museum

IRBID (J.T.) — The Department of Antiquities Monday took over from the Public Security Department (PSD) an 18-century Ottoman prison that had been used as a police station for the northern region of Irbid and announced its intention to transform the complex into a popular heritage museum and a national library.

Antiquities Department Director Safwan Tell said that the transformation process will take no less than one year to complete.

"We are embarking on the process of refurbishing and remodelling the interior of the two-storey building to achieve the targeted objective," said Dr. Tell in a statement after the handover ceremony in Irbid.

The PSD has set up its own police facilities on a plot of land donated for the purpose by the Irbid Municipality two years ago, said Dr. Tell.

The ground floor of the building will be made into a museum displaying artefacts while the first floor will serve as offices for the Antiquities Department, said Dr. Tell. He said that the building will also have a laboratory, a warehouse and maintenance units.

"The refurbished building will hopefully be turned into an integrated cultural, educational and artistic centre," said Dr. Tell, adding: "We are spending nearly JD1 million on this vital project that would help preserve Jordan's treasures for the future generations."

CORRECTION

In the June 20 issue of the Jordan Times the date for the holding of the fashion/jewellery show at the Philadelphia Hotel was erroneously given as June 23. The show will be held on June 24. The Jordan Times regrets any inconvenience.

Jordan Times
Tel.: 667171

New economic council announced

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Council of Ministers Monday announced the members of the new Economic Consultative Council which is chaired by the prime minister.

According to economist Dr. Fahd Fanek, the reformation of the council was necessitated by the June 5 Cabinet reshuffle which created new ministries.

Dr. Fanek, who is included in the new set up, told the Jordan Times that the council has no legal status and only provides advice to the prime minister on matters related to the economy.

The council, which meets from time to time upon the request of the prime minister, normally groups people representing the private and public sectors who discuss issues referred to them by the government, Dr. Fanek said.

The new council contains the following: The minister of education, the minister of state for prime ministry affairs and information minister, the ministers of transport, water and irrigation, finance, tourism and anti-

quities, industry and trade, post and communications, supply, agriculture, energy and mineral resources, as well as the governor of the Central Bank of Jordan, the president of Aqaba Region Authority, the chairman of the Amman Chamber of Industry, the director general of the Social Security Corporation, the president of the Jordanian Businessmen Association, the president of the Association of Banks in Jordan, the chairman of the Federation of Jordanian Farmers, the dean of the University of Jordan's Faculty of Economy and Commerce, the secretary-general of the Federation of Labour Unions, the secretary general of the Jordanian Banks Union, the president of the Jordanian Contractors Association, the chairman of the Union of Insurance Companies, a member of the shipping lines agents, the head of the Jordanian Consumers Protection Society in addition to Dr. Fahd Al Fanek and businessmen Hamad Al Farhan, Awni Al Masri and Basel Jardaneh.

Marriott name GSA for Jordan

Aramex has been appointed as the Jordan general sales agent (GSA) for Marriott International, Samir Daqqaq, Marriott's director of international sales and marketing of hotels, resorts and suites, announced recently.

In addition to the appointment, which comes into immediate effect, Marriott and Aramex are establishing a base from which to operate the country-wide reservations responsibility for the 750-plus global hotel group.

"The Marriott-Aramex link has numerous strategic advantages," said Mr. Daqqaq.

"We (Marriott) are looking for a partner with an in-bred respect for computerisation, automation, accuracy and speed. Aramex — by nature of its core business of courier and information service — is synonymous with these attributes and more."

As part of the co-operation, Aramex will establish the (Jordanian) hub for the lodging group's automated reservations

system — MARSHA. Travel agents will be able to contact specialist staff and have immediate access, via MARSHA, to all Marriott properties worldwide.

"Through MARSHA a Marriott reservation can be made and confirmed in just 90 seconds," Mr. Daqqaq said.

MARSHA can also be accessed through virtually all major reservations systems including: Sabre (Gulf Air) Apollo; Galileo Gemini.

Fadi Ghandour, president and chief operating officer of Aramex, called the alliance with Marriott "a positive step for Aramex, as our current business plan calls for growth through complementary business alliances."

"We are delighted to be entrusted with this responsibility and consider the investment in terms of staff infrastructure, to be full of mutual opportunities," he added.

A reception to mark the alliance is being held June 19 at the Amman Marriott Hotel.

Phosphate exports to figure high during Indian minister's visit

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan is expected to press its efforts to raise the level of Indian imports of Jordanian phosphates and other fertiliser-related products during talks with India's agriculture minister who is scheduled to begin a two-day visit to the Kingdom today. Balram Jakhar, who is one of the leading members of the Ruling Congress Party, is arriving from Syria and his visit to the Kingdom comes in response to an invitation from the government.

In addition to Minister of Agriculture Mansour Ben Tarif and Minister of Supply Adel Qudah, other Jordanian officials scheduled to meet with Mr. Jakhar include the head of the Jordan Fertiliser Corporation and heads of the Jordan Phosphate Mines Company and the Arab Potash Company.

Mr. Jakhar is a highly influential member of the government of Prime Minister Narasimha Rao, who has scored consider-

able success in opening up the Indian economy through innovative means that were considered taboo by previous governments in New Delhi.

One of the early measures adopted by the government was a decanalising of phosphate and potash imports and withdrawing the heavy subsidies it used to offer to fertiliser processing plants as an indirect means to encourage the farming sector.

The move meant that the state-run Minerals and Metals Trading Corporation (MMTC) was no longer the sole body authorised to import the items and that the private sector was free to exercise its options.

This in turn means that Jordan, which was one of the main suppliers of phosphates and potash to India, could no longer hope for Indian government agreements stipulating a minimum level of imports from the Kingdom.

Indian imports from Jordan dropped to JD65.8 million in 1993, compared with JD129 million in 1990, but

the decline was not solely related to the decanalising of phosphates and potash, industry experts say.

They say that the international phosphate market was in deep recession since 1991 when the trend to import finished fertiliser products rather than raw materials gained ground. Adding further to exporters' problems was the "dumping prices" offered by the republics of the ex-Soviet Union, forcing a depression in prices.

Fierce competition from American suppliers complicated the situation further, the experts say. "At one point, American exporters were offering finished products at prices lower than the raw material, shutting off most exporters of rock phosphates," said one expert.

However, the situation has improved since then and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) of the ex-Soviet Union are no longer offering low prices since the governments of the republics realised that they were incurring heavy losses since the

prices they used to offer were even lower than their production and transportation costs.

Jordanian-Indian cooperation in agriculture is also expected to be reviewed during Mr. Jakhar's visit.

Although the two countries have a cooperation agreement and despite the fact that India has achieved self-sufficiency in meeting the food needs of the nearly 900 million people, Jordan has not really taken advantage of the agricultural expertise available in the sub-continent, officials say.

While in Syria, Mr. Jakhar signed an agreement with his Syrian counterpart As'ad Mustafa on agricultural cooperation, mainly in the fields of farming, irrigation and forestry. Reports from Damascus said Syria hoped to benefit from Indian expertise to help boost its agricultural production and exports. Agriculture has been one of the mainstay areas along with oil and gas for the Syrian economy in recent years.

WHAT'S GOING ON

TV5 PROGRAMME

★ A variety programme transmitted by TV5 Europe station entitled "L'Heure De Verite" at the French Cultural Centre at 6:00 p.m.

POETRY RECITAL

★ Poetry recital by several poets at the Phoenix Gallery for Art and Culture at 7:00 p.m.

THIRD YOUTH THEATRE FESTIVAL

★ Drama in Arabic entitled "The Patient" at the Royal Cultural Centre at 7:30 p.m.

NEWS HOUR

★ ABC News Highlights and McNeil-Lehrer News Hour at the American Center at 5:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

★ Painting exhibition by Naila Deeb on the Goethe-Institut at 5:30 p.m.

★ Exhibition of paintings by Sophia Ziadeh at the Royal Cultural Centre.

★ Exhibition by Iraqi artists at Ab'ad Art Gallery in Mecca Street.

★ An art exhibition "The Form and Colour in the Arab Art Exhibition," by 16 artists from Jordan and Iraq at the Spanish Cultural Centre.

★ Exhibition of works by several Arab artists at the Phoenix Gallery for Art and Culture (Tel. 695291).

★ Exhibition by artist Mohammad Fradi at the Orfali Art Gallery in Umm Utheina (Tel. 826932).

★ Child Needs Expo at the International Motor Exhibition, Airport Highway (Tel. 653836).

★ Exhibition of photographs by artist Mohammad Al Baddawi at the Royal Cultural Centre.

★ Exhibition by plastic artist Shawkat Al Alousi at the Alia Art Gallery (Tel. 672872).

★ Exhibition on the development of "Le Louvre" at the French Cultural Centre.

★ Painting exhibition by artist George Bahjouri at Al Balqa Art Gallery (Tel. 720677).

★ Painting exhibition by Jordanian artist 'Abdul Ra'uf Sham'oun at Darat Al Fann of the 'Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation in Jabal Lweibidh. Also showing "permanent" exhibition of 56 Arab contemporary artists (Tel. 643251/2).

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- Barlant Jewellers, tel: 617599
- MAP, tel: 611065
- National Music Conservatory, tel: 687620/1
- Orthodox Club, tel: 810491/4
- Philadelphia Hotel, tel: 607100
- Romero, tel: 644227
- Yassin Hairdresser, tel: 607607

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REVERSING THE EXODUS: Host countries and international agencies expect difficult times trying to convince Vietnamese refugees to return to their homeland (GAMA photo)

Camp suicides highlight hardcore boat-people problem

By John Rogers
Reuter

HANOI — Suicides, mass hunger-strikes and agitation in Asia's camps for Vietnamese boat people have underscored how hard it will be to clear the detention centres in the next 18 months.

Pressure to return to Vietnam is expected to increase on the estimated 48,000 Vietnamese likely not to win refugee status, though governments and international agencies are resolved to use persuasion rather than force.

Positions appear likely to harden as the battle for the hearts and minds of the boat people heats up between now and the end of 1995, the informal deadline set by Western and Asian governments to clear the camps.

Vietnam and other Asian governments will increase efforts to persuade waverers among the 56,000 boat people left in the camps that life in Vietnam is not as bad as they think and is, indeed, improving rapidly as the economy develops.

"We have to find ways to make propaganda in the camps and encourage them to see the real situation here and come back," said Tran Van Thinh, deputy head of the Foreign Ministry's Consular Department.

For added credibility, Hanoi is considering sending some of the 62,000 boat people who have returned since 1989 back to the camps to tell friends about life at home, he says.

But hardcore anti-Communist activists have stepped up efforts to stop people returning.

Western and Asian governments vowed publicly for the first time at a Bangkok meeting in June to take action against people in the camps working against voluntary repatriation.

"It was recognised that there was organised resistance in some areas to repatriation and it would seem that some of it was coordinated from the outside," an official of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Hanoi said.

"There are pressure groups and lobbying groups in some Western countries, especially the United States, who are agitating on

behalf of people in the first-asylum countries."

Agitation increased after the 30-odd governments working under the 1989 Comprehensive Plan for Action (CPA), sponsored by the UNHCR, resolved last February to make the end of 1995 the target date to resolve the boat people issue.

Most of the trouble has been in Hong Kong, where about 27,000 boat people remain in camps, nearly half the total.

Thousands of boat people have gone on hunger-strikes and in April more than 200 were injured in a police raid to remove 1,500 inmates from whitehead camp.

In Indonesia, two people died from self-immolation — a historic form of political protest in Vietnam — and at least six others tried to disembowel themselves.

They were protesting against an agreement between Hanoi and Jakarta last October for the "orderly return" of boat people which activists say could mean deportation.

The UNHCR official in Hanoi said lobbyists were encouraging boat people in the camps to challenge screening decisions which denied them refugee status.

"They are basically saying: 'stick it out and the decision will be changed. We will see that it is,'" the official said.

Screening of boat people for refugee status has been completed in the Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia, is closed to completion in Thailand and is due to end in Hong Kong by September.

The CPA countries resolved in Bangkok that screening decisions would not be reviewed.

Bangkok's message to people in the camps was — if you're not a political refugee, then decide now to go back to Vietnam because that decision is not going to change.

"Those who win refugee status will eventually get new homes elsewhere," a Hanoi diplomat said. "But those judged to be economic migrants have to face the fact that Vietnam is home."

Against this background, programmes to aid the voluntary return of boat people are winding down.

The European Community International Programme (ECIP), which gives credits and funds resettlement programmes for returnees, finishes at the end of November.

A Scandinavian scheme, Nordic Assistance to Repatriated Vietnamese (NARV), winds up by the end of 1994.

Further turning the screws, the Bangkok meeting decided that Asian countries will announce target dates for closing each camp as soon as possible.

Governments were told at Bangkok that they should actively promote repatriation.

"Countries which have taken a stronger role, like Thailand, have had a higher rate of return," the UNHCR official said.

Remittances sent by relatives in the West will be curbed wherever it is legal to do so. Funds could be kept in escrow accounts for boat people to collect when they go home.

Vietnam says it is happy to receive boat people who volunteer to return and is stepping up interviewing procedures in the camps. Hanoi insists international financial help is essential.

But newer, higher-profile crises such as Rwanda and Bosnia are sucking up scarce funds.

"It was impressed on the governments that they had better get these people back or there won't be any money to pay for it," the UNHCR official said.

Vietnamese left their country in rickety fishing boats during the 1970s and 1980s to escape what they regarded as persecution after Communist forces won the Vietnam war in 1975 or, in the 1980s, to escape poverty.

Most of the former group were southerners who pitched up in camps in Thailand, the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia or Singapore. Most of the economic refugees were northerners who ended up in Hong Kong.

The exodus has slowed to a trickle now that political and economic conditions have improved in Vietnam.

Most people now leaving are enticed by false rumours that Japan will pay them large sums of money to go home if they reach the Japanese coast.

Mubarak orchestrates anti-militant campaign

By Samia Nakhoul
Reuter

CAIRO — Has the Egyptian government really crushed the Muslim militant movement or is there merely a lull in the movement's struggle to make Egypt a pure Islamic state?

After months of arrests, executions and raids on militant hideouts, the Egyptian authorities have obviously succeeded in reducing the level of violence in the long conflict between the militants and the security forces.

The militants have stopped bombing banks, attacking foreign tourists and assassinating political and military figures.

And the authorities, flush with success, have now moved on to attack other symbols of Muslim fundamentalism — preachers in mosques, lawyers, journalists and last but not least the influential but outlawed

Muslim Brotherhood movement.

A turning-point was the death of Talaat Yassin Hammam, the leader of a military wing of the militant Gama'a Al Islamiya (Islamic Group), in a raid on his Cairo flat on April 25.

"The militants are not in a strong position. They have been hit from all sides. Many have gone underground, their leaders have either been killed or are in prison," said a Western diplomat who follows the movement closely.

"The government has disrupted the command structure, probably it has broken any link between the internal and external leaders, so we will have a period of calm for several months. How they can regroup I don't know," he added.

Muslim fundamentalist groups in Egypt, including the Muslim Brotherhood itself, have a history of

bouncing back from defeat, but sometimes only after a gap of several years.

Abdul Halim Mandour, a lawyer close to the wider Islamist movement, said that the calm was probably only temporary and that the government's campaign against the Muslim Brotherhood and other groups could eventually backfire.

"Since the death of Talaat Yassin the violence has indeed stopped... it seems the Gama'a thought of taking a respite. It could be to reorganise themselves," he told Reuters.

"But what I believe is that in the Gama'a there are thousands of Yassin Hammams. Every time they kill a militant they say he was a key leader in the military branch and we always found that others appear again," he added. "I don't expect this campaign will stop."

"The confrontation with

the Brotherhood is tougher. The Brotherhood are powerful and influential. They are ingrained secretly in many syndicates, and spread in villages and towns. They are more dangerous. They are very well organised and not public. They have economic superiority. When the Brotherhood decides to confront they will be extremely violent," he said.

The Brotherhood, unlike the Gama'a and other groups like Jihad, does not publicly advocate violence to achieve its objective of a strict Islamic state in Egypt.

But political and diplomatic sources say that in recent confessions violent militants have revealed links between their movements and the Brotherhood.

The authorities have since taken an increasingly strong stand against the Brotherhood, arresting many members and sum-

moning its 8-year-old spiritual leader, Hamed About Nasr, for questioning about leaflets which they say he wrote.

The Brotherhood has further angered the government by mobilising lawyers behind protests against the death of a prominent Islamic lawyer in police custody in April.

In April police used tear-gas and rubber bullets to thwart an attempt by lawyers to march on the presidential palace. They arrested at least 27 lawyers and 17 remain in custody.

In its revived campaign against the Brotherhood, the government reopened a 1992 case in which a computer company close to the Brotherhood was accused of planning to overthrow the government and seize power. Nine members were arrested in the case earlier this month.

President Hosni Mubarak and Interior Minister

Hassan Al Alfi have both spoken out against the Brotherhood, which has been officially banned by late President Jamal Abdul Nasser after plotting to kill him. In practice the Brotherhood has been tolerated as a platform for religious activists since the early 1970s.

Other victims of the government's latest campaign have been some lawyers who, far from being Islamists, are secularists, human rights activists and members of small leftist parties.

"The object may be simply to instill fear, this is a police state operation, fear is fear, intimidation and terror play a role in keeping your friends off balance," one diplomat said.

Newspapers which pose no obvious threat to the government have also suffered. The authorities have banned the weekly Middle East Times for the fifth week running.



Hosni Mubarak

THE INDIAN SUB CONTINENT

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OAU to lobby rich states for Africa Marshall plan

TUNIS (R) — Tunisia, newly elected at the head of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) plans to lobby rich countries for a "Marshall plan" for Africa, saying it is their interest to help rescue the continent's economy.

Foreign Minister Habib Ben Yahia, setting the agenda for the start of Tunisia's chairmanship of the pan-African grouping, said that Tunisia had laid the groundwork for a programme of actions rather than words.

"The new phase is one of development to complete political independence through economic progress," he said.

He said Tunisia, which took over the OAU chairmanship from Egypt at the summit, would press for an African version of the Marshall plan which channelled U.S. aid to rebuild Europe's shattered economy after World War II.

Such a plan, he added, could harness African debt repayments to help solve economic and environmental problems in the context of the world economy.

Tunisian President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali would put the idea to a meeting of the Group of Seven leading industrialised nations in Naples, Italy, on July 9, he said.

The message, he added, would ask them to examine their consciences. "It is in the interests of the industrialised countries," he added.

billion in 1992.

Mr. Ben Yahia said OAU trade and finance ministers would meet in Tunis in October.

"The Tunis meeting will consider Africa's place in the new world economic and trading order following the signing in Marrakesh of the Uruguay Round pact," he added. "We will not be meeting to philosophise and hold idealised talks on Africa's place but to look at ways of defending African interests in a world in which competition will be fierce."

OAU foreign ministers will meet at the end of the year to discuss the development challenges faced by African countries.

"The solutions have been identified, it will be mainly a question of finding the missing ingredient, how to mobilise national, regional and international resources and to identify priorities," Mr. Ben Yahia said.

Dollar crumbles below 1.60 marks

LONDON (R) — The dollar sank below 1.60 marks Monday as the foreign-exchange market tested the resolve of central bankers to keep the U.S. currency afloat.

Waves of stop-loss sales battered the dollar to yet another eight-month low, pushing the currency quickly below the 1.60-mark psychological barrier in midday trading.

The dollar has lost nearly four per cent of its value in a week and has not been this low since Oct. 14 last year. Dealers said the U.S. Federal Reserve (Fed) faced tough task in convincing other central banks, particularly the German Bundesbank, that the time was ripe to intervene jointly to boost the dollar.

"I think there will be intervention but at this level

and time, I don't know," said Masamichi Yasuda, chief dealer at Bank of Tokyo in London. "Rationally speaking, I think they'd wait until we broke 1.60 marks and more dollar-shorts (selling) have piled up."

Central banks may not come into rescue the dollar until it falls decisively under 1.60 marks or even 1.59, dealers said.

Although the dollar is trading more than three pence below the level at which central banks jointly intervened in May, the dollar/yen rate's relative stability may deter central banks from acting too hastily, they said.

"The Fed knows that unless conditions are ripe intervention rarely works and we haven't established (those conditions) yet," said Brian Hilliard, senior economist at

French investment house Societe General Strauss Turbul in London.

A U.S. think-tank predicted Friday that the dollar would drop by 10 per cent over the next 18 months, and this triggered the spiral downwards from above 1.63 marks. A perception that official German interest rates are unlikely to ease further and a sickly U.S. treasury bond market have also fuelled the dollar's recent decline.

The dollar was at 1.5990 marks and 102.04 yen at 1155 GMT, down sharply from late Friday levels of 1.6117 and 102.75.

The Bundesbank may be less willing to intervene now as a strong mark would be positive news amid growing concern over high German money-supply growth and ris-

ing commodity prices, dealers and economists said.

But the Germans might not want to see the mark so strong because it could abort their economic recovery, said Warwick Lightfoot, treasury economist at Royal Bank of Scotland here.

General lack of confidence in U.S. currency policy has made the dollar weak against most major currencies, dealers said.

"There was a feel-good factor for the dollar in the 1980s during the Reagan administration, but now there's a feel-bad factor for the Clinton administration," Mr. Lightfoot said.

Varying signals from U.S. officials on exchange-rate policy have decreased the market's confidence in U.S. President Bill Clinton's administration, he said.

Damascus sees public sector deficit after wage rise

DAMASCUS (R) — Syria's finance minister said Sunday a decision to grant workers a 30 per cent wage rise from May 1 would lead to a public sector deficit for the eight months to end-1994.

Finance Minister Khaled Mahayni told the official Tishreen newspaper in an interview the public sector faced a deficit of 3.5 billion Syrian liras (\$83.3 million) in the eight months from May 1 to Dec. 12 because of a projected shortfall in revenue in the 1994 budget.

Mr. Mahayni appeared to be responding to criticism from trade unionists over the government's decision to raise the price of subsidised bread and fuel last month although state subsidies were not removed altogether.

The trade unions said the savings on subsidies were more than adequate to cover the cost of the wage increase.

But Mr. Mahayni said that an allocation in the new budget recently passed by parliament to cover the wage rise and the 16 per cent saving on the subsidy bill would still leave the public sector in the red.

Parliament this month approved a balanced budget for 1994 with projected revenue set at 144 billion liras (\$3.4 billion).

The cost of the wage increases for state workers, who make up nearly half of the permanent labour force, was estimated at 18.1 billion liras (\$430.9 million), Mr. Mahayni told Tishreen.

Report says Arabs remain big spenders despite low oil prices

ABU DHABI (AFP) — People in key Arab oil producing countries are still spending a lot of money despite an economic downturn over the past decade due to weak crude prices, an official Arab report has showed.

In contrast, private spending in the remaining Arab League members has sharply fallen in real prices due to rapid population growth and persistent economic problems, said the report by the Arab Monetary Fund (AMF).

The report divided the 22-member League into two groups: the first are main oil producing states Iraq, Libya, Algeria and the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and the second are Egypt and the remaining members.

Although the population of the first group accounts for 31 per cent of the total Arab population, their private consumption stood at around 70 per cent of the total private spending in the region, the report said.

Private consumption, which includes spending by families on goods and services, stood at \$168.2 billion in 1992 in the first group while in the second group accounted for \$92.4 billion.

The report showed private consumption in the first group stood at \$108 billion in 1985 but in real prices it has fallen by 1.1 per cent annually. In the second group, it stood at \$60.2 billion but in real prices consumption has plunged by 20.6 per cent in the same period.

"Due to a decline in the real value of private consumption in the second group, coupled with positive population growth rates, the per capita share of the consumption continued to decline," the report said.

It provided no figures for 1993 but official reports have shown private consumption in Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Kuwait was higher due to an economic and population growth in the first two states and a post-war recovery in the third.

A breakdown showed a large gap in private spending between oil producing states and other members due to the high per capita income in those states.

While it averaged as high as \$3,800 a year in Saudi Arabia, \$7,500 in the UAE and \$10,500 in Libya, per capita share of consumption was as low as \$550 in Egypt, \$250 in Sudan, \$74 in Yemen

and \$700 in Morocco.

The gap also existed in public consumption, which includes government spending on services, goods and salaries, according to the report.

Public consumption in the first group totalled \$97.3 billion in 1992 while in the second group it stood at \$20.3 billion.

The large gap in incomes in the Arab World was one of the reasons cited by Iraqi President Saddam Hussein for his invasion of super-rich Kuwait.

But Kuwait and other Gulf oil producers have blamed their fellow League members for their economic woes, saying they were not using aid properly and their economic policies were inadequate.

GCC states — Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, Oman, Bahrain and the UAE — have provided the bulk of the nearly \$100 billion in aid extended to Arab and other states between 1970 and 1992. Total cash flow into Arab nations exceeded \$370 billion in the same period.

The AMF report showed the Arab World's final consumption, comprising private and public consumption, totalled \$378 billion in 1992, nearly 78 per cent of the gross

domestic product of \$483 billion.

Saudi Arabia, the world's top oil producer and exporter, remained the biggest spender at \$90.6 billion. Consumption stood at \$31.2 billion in Algeria, at \$26.7 billion in Libya, at \$22.3 billion in the UAE and at \$16.7 billion in Kuwait.

Although it is suffering from international sanctions, Iraq emerged as the second biggest Arab spender, with consumption of \$62 billion.

The report, which gave no figures for Somalia and Palestinians showed Djibouti and Mauritania were the smallest spenders at \$339.2 million and \$1,058 billion respectively.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR TUESDAY JUNE 21, 1994

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: The Sagittarius Moon times Venus as we enter our Summer Solstice and the Sun enters Cancer (Moonchild) paving the way to greater resourcefulness and ingenuity and to greater future production.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Put those creative ideas to work and don't permit an unworthy person to interfere. Schedule your time wisely to get all assignments completed.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Avoid an outside foe and be more concerned with improving business affairs. Study every angle of a new project so you can get the right results.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Take time to confer with associates and exchange clever ideas. They can be of help to you at this time. Be poised for any circumstance.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Make sure you take care of monetary affairs sensibly and don't become involved in any fly-by-night schemes to get rich.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Get started on personal aims and don't let outsiders interfere. Join a worthwhile group and enjoy more social life with those close to you.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Plan a new course of activity which will help you gain personal and business aims that are important to you at this time.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 23) Pursue goals of an idealistic nature and you can easily gain them. Take time to visit close ties in the evening whom you wish to see.

SCORPIO: (October 24 to November 21) Listen to the ideas of higher-ups and go along with them for best results now. Take no risks in motion today and you will stay out of trouble.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Put worries aside and look into new outlets which can improve your position in life. Strive for success and you will have much prestige.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) This is a good day to obtain data you need for a personal project. Good organizational work is the key to success now.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Important civic affairs can be handled wisely now. Make sure you carry through with promises you have made at this time to friends and loved ones.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Look over your environment and make plans for improvement in the future. A good friend could be helpful to you now pertaining to a new project.

THE Daily Crossword by Matthew Higgins

ACROSS

1. Connotation
2. Lost color
3. Oversee
4. "And what is it?"
5. Gam main
6. Kermess
7. Gully
8. Men's way
9. AMA members
10. Pommel
11. French dialect
12. On edge
13. Pluffy dish
14. Apply of
15. Modern day
16. Toss
17. Three minutes
18. Italian family of
19. Golf course
20. Not "far"
21. WWI troops
22. Caves
23. Hurt
24. Bizarre
25. Famous
26. Considerable
27. Macle
28. Discover
29. Easter flowers
30. Auction
31. Chessman
32. Remains
33. Eccentric
34. US author
35. Follow
36. Middle Eastern bread
37. Ready to
38. Irregularly
39. Notched
40. Heroin

DOWN

1. "Far be it"
2. Ensl
3. Painting and sculpture
4. For each
5. Win at cribbage
6. Wazir
7. Unit of eggs
8. Overkill
9. Differences of opinion
10. Legal
11. Eccentric
12. Relates
13. Toot
14. Land - help
15. Prong
16. Intest
17. Region
18. Stout
19. Mante or
20. Part of a boom
21. Blacksmith
22. Ensl
23. 34 inches
24. Deck feature
25. A star
26. 37 Oct a top grade
27. Speck
41. Mar-made
42. Fabric
43. Serves
44. Deck feature
45. A star
46. Glasses of
47. French town
48. Agitated state
49. Eight: prof.
50. One: prof.
51. One: prof.
52. One: prof.
53. One: prof.
54. One: prof.
55. One: prof.
56. Prosperous

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TURKISH AIRLINES

THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen

GLASBERGEN

"It would be a lot easier to accept our differences if you'd start acting more like me!"

JUMBLE THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Mike Argrillon

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

KASHY

SYSMO

ABHORR

BOWELL

Answer: "KASHY" "SYSMO" "ABHORR" "BOWELL"

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: TROTH SIEGE NAUGHT INVOKE
Answer: What King Arthur's girl said before they parted - "NIGHT, KNIGHT"

Peanuts

CANOEING ALL THE WAY, HUH?

NO, THERE USED TO BE A CAMPGROUND DOWNSTREAM, BUT IT'S NOT THERE, ANYMORE

Andy Capp

YOU DON'T STAND A CHANCE, ANDY, NOT IN THE STATE YOU'RE IN

ANYTHING'S POSSIBLE JACK IF YOU'VE GOT CHARISMA

Mutt'n'Jeff

CONDEMNED? YOU'RE GOING TO DYNAMITE THAT HOUSE DOWN! YOU CAN'T MY PAL, JEFF, IS IN THERE!

THE CHARGE HAS BEEN SET OFF! STAND BACK!

SHUFF-SHUFF! POOR, DEAR, OLD FRIEND JEFF! SO LONG, OLD BUDDY!

ALL I DO WAS PULL THE PLUG TO LET THE WATER OUT AND THE WHOLE HOUSE CAME DOWN!

مكتبة في القدس

Financial Markets

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	Value/Close	20/6/94	20/6/94
Sterling Pound	1.5325	1.5325	
Deutsche Mark	1.6095	1.6110	
Swiss Franc	1.3552	1.3580	
French Franc	5.5005	5.5050	
Japanese Yen	102.69	101.58	
European Currency Unit	1.1928	1.1917	

1990 Per 100
European Opening = 2.00 a.m. GMT

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Dutch Guilder	0.3825	0.3844
Swedish Krona	---	---
Italian Lira	0.0436	0.0438
Belgian Franc	---	---

For 100

Other Currencies

Date: 20/6/94

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.8110	1.8300
Lebanese Lira	0.040175	0.041520
Saudi Riyal	0.16300	0.16480
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.3270	2.3850
Omani Riyal	0.18710	0.18850
Egyptian Pound	0.2010	0.2250
Omani Riyal	1.7750	1.7910
UAE Dirham	0.16760	0.16850
Greek Drachma	0.2760	0.3125
Cypriot Pound	1.3325	1.3960

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Kuwaiti deputies want spending cuts

KUWAIT (R) — A Kuwaiti parliamentary panel is seeking spending cuts rather than taxation or privatisation to trim the 1994/95 budget deficit, a newspaper said Monday.

"We have decided to start this year by cutting government expenditure," Adnan Abdul Samad, a member of parliament's financial and economic affairs committee, was quoted as saying in an interview with the English-language Arab Times.

The emirate's proposed 1994/95 budget shows a deficit of 2.1 billion dinars (\$7 billion), a 40 per cent increase on the amount initially forecast for 1993/94.

The committee is due to submit comments about the government's budget plans to parliament before the plenary assembly debates them shortly. The budget takes effect on July 1.

"Both privatisation and taxation require passing new legislation," he said. The committee decided to act "within the existing laws... and this is for this year," he added.

Mr. Abdul Samad reiterated that taxation and privatisation were being considered by the committee as means of increasing state revenue.

But, "the principle at this stage is that salaries of civil servants will be touched (for reduction)," he noted.

Kuwaiti voters are used to a generous welfare state which provides public services free or at minimal cost and government jobs for virtually all nationals who want one.

The emirate relies on its shrinking overseas investments to cover the mushrooming deficit. Heavy Gulf war-related payments halved foreign reserves and worries over Iraq have further slowed business activity.

Members of parliament have warned that continuous withdrawals from state reserves would jeopardise the future of the small Gulf state.

The economic committee of the emirate's Supreme Planning Council said that without reforming the state-orchestrated economy the budget deficit would grow by almost 50 per cent by the year 2000 and the dinar would be seriously affected.

The committee in a report published in Al Qabas newspaper recommended "the rationalisation of (public) wages allocations... and cancelling government subsidies on some programmes," as means of trimming budget deficit.

Among other measures it recommended were reviewing the structure of customs charges and repricing public services and studying the possibilities of imposing an effective taxation system on the dividends of companies and at a later stage the income of citizens.

Income tax is as yet unknown in the emirate. Company tax is levied only on foreign firms.

A parliamentary panel was reported on Sunday as saying that Kuwait's future was threatened by a growing budget deficit but the extent of the danger was not understood by government.

"If the parliament and the cabinet do not tackle this problem in a serious and strict manner it will expose Kuwait's future to economic and social dangers," Al Seyasseh newspaper quoted a report by parliament's financial and economic affairs committee as saying.

Uzbekistan details currency plans

TASHKENT (R) — Uzbekistan has said it would issue a new currency on July 1, but it has won no financial backing from international institutions and analysts said economic conditions were unfavourable for the move.

Islam Karimov, president of this conservative former Soviet republic, called the new currency "sacred." He also decreed measures to protect vulnerable members of society and to encourage export-oriented firms.

"The national currency, the flag, the anthem and the constitution are symbols of the state and its people and are sacred attributes of independence," the official Narodnoye Slovo newspaper quoted Mr. Karimov as saying.

But Western analysts said the foundations of support for the new som currency were insufficient in this import-dependent nation where inflation is far higher than bank interest rates.

Istvan Szalkai, representative of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in Tashkent, said the IMF had not yet reached agreement to provide financial support for the new currency.

"We have not been involved directly in the introduction of the national currency," he said.

Uzbek officials have said they were hoping for between \$140 million and \$160 million from the IMF to back the new money. The World Bank has also been preparing a \$180 million loan, including balance of payments assistance.

But the conditions of faster free market reforms attached to the two loans have so far been too much for Uzbekistan to stomach, although negotiations are continuing.

Western analysts said that without economic restructuring, the new currency of this Central Asian state of 22 million people was likely to encounter severe difficulties.

An annualised inflation rate of 1,500 per cent in the first four months of 1994 suggests the new currency will struggle to hold its value against the dollar, they said.

Negative real interest rates add to inflationary pressure. Twelve-month bank deposit rates in Uzbekistan's Savings Bank range from 20 to 100 per cent and inter-bank loan rates are set at 200 per cent.

Uzbekistan runs a considerable trade deficit, a factor likely to increase demand for foreign currencies.

Officials said the som — a colourful banknote depicting the architectural splendours of Samarkand — would be issued at one to 1,000 of the currency it is replacing, the som coupon.

But Mr. Karimov, rather than decreeing measures to tighten money supply before the currency launch, Saturday unveiled a gamut of new welfare payments.

JORDAN MARKET PLACE

U.N. reports major violations of fragile ceasefire in Bosnia

SARAJEVO (R) — Major violations of the fragile 10-day old truce in Bosnia were reported by the United Nations Monday only hours after Bosnian Serbs threatened to launch a decisive counter-offensive against their Muslim foes.

The U.N. Protection Force (UNPROFOR) spokesman in Sarajevo, Commander Eric Chaperon, said there had been artillery duels but there was no evidence of preparations for large-scale infantry operations.

He said UNPROFOR was aware of media reports of fighting, adding: "Obviously there are major violations of the truce."

Maj. Chaperon said there was "no confirmed evidence of ground fighting or preparations for major ground attacks."

Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic told Reuters late Sunday that the Bosnian Serb Army (BSA) would launch a "counter-offensive

identical to that in Gorazde" if Muslim attacks on the Mount Ozren area did not stop.

An unnamed senior BSA officer backed the threat, saying his forces would drop their policy of "passive defence" in the event of further Muslim attacks, the Serb News Agency (SRNA) said.

Serbs halted their fierce assault on the Muslim enclave of Gorazde in eastern Bosnia in April only after NATO threatened to strike against Serb positions.

Mr. Karadzic said thousands of Serb civilians had fled the Muslim offensive which he said was aimed at securing control of a strategic road in central Bosnia.

The road cuts across a long finger of mountainous terrain under Serb control but surrounded on three sides by forces of the Bosnian government.

The Yugoslav News Agency, Tanjug, said a number of Serb civilians had been killed

and injured by Bosnian army shelling of the frontline village of Vozuca. It reported inhabitants fleeing en masse.

Bosnian Serb Television said the Muslims had taken some territory near Vozuca but no key positions had been lost. It said the military situation was critical.

Earlier BSA sources told Reuters Muslim troops had broken through defences and taken a number of strategic hilltops to the west of Vozuca.

Maj. Chaperon said 150 artillery detonations were recorded Sunday in the Doboj area on the foot of Mount Ozren.

He said a BSA liaison officer reported a supply convoy was ambushed some 10 kilometres south of Gorazde town. Two BSA soldiers were reported killed and two others wounded in the attack.

Tanjug said Muslims fired 60 mortars on Serb positions around Brcko straddling the

vital Posavina supply route in northern Bosnia Sunday.

Maj. Chaperon said 100 detonations with anti-air and machinegun fire were recorded in the Gradacac-Posavina corridor.

The U.N. is still struggling to secure compliance with a temporary one-month ceasefire, agreed earlier this month and intended to prepare both sides to accept a long-term peace plan now being finalised by diplomats.

The plan is expected to stand or fall on the details of a map of Bosnia's ethnic division that will give the Muslim and Croat Bosnian Federation 51 per cent of the country and Serbs the rest.

The Serbs have won control of 70 per cent of Bosnia and diplomats believe it would be almost impossible to force them to relinquish that much territory, especially in the Posavina corridor linking Serb-held parts of western Bosnia and Croatia with Serbia.

Last Khmer Rouge quit Phnom Penh

PHNOM PENH (Agencies) — The last official of the ultra-left Khmer Rouge pulled out of the Cambodian capital Monday in line with a government eviction order issued after a breakdown in negotiations to end the civil war.

"There's nobody left, they have all gone now," said an official from the royal palace standing outside the deserted guerrilla compound.

Police officers said eight junior officials and caretakers left for Bangkok after senior guerrilla representatives were escorted to the airport by police Saturday.

A Khmer Rouge official said the group of eight would travel to the Thai-Cambodian

border and then across to Khmer Rouge headquarters at Pailin or to the nearby guerrilla stronghold at Phnom Malai.

The government ordered the closure of the guerrillas' compound late Friday after the failure of peace talks to end the guerrilla struggle against the government installed under last year's U.N.-supervised elections.

The two sides met Wednesday for peace talks but discussions broke up the following day with the Khmer Rouge refusing to agree to a ceasefire.

In a statement announcing the eviction, the government said the Cambodian people were anxious to see an end to

fighting and were angry with the radical faction's intransigence.

"The Ministry of the Interior may not be able to stop the anger of the people and may not be able to provide security for your group," the statement warned.

King Norodom Sihanouk backed the eviction order, describing it as a "wise" move.

In a statement faxed from his residence in Beijing, the king said he feared that "if any accidents were to befall the Khmer Rouge officials, it would further aggravate the fratricidal hostility."

Meanwhile, Cambodia's co-prime ministers arrived in Indonesia Monday for a three-day visit.

Riot police battle farmers, students in Seoul

SEOUL (R) — South Korean riot police Monday fired volleys of tear gas to disperse thousands of students and farmers in fresh protests against Seoul's plan to open its rice market, witnesses said.

The protesters occupied a road outside the national assembly building, burning effigies representing President Kim Young-Sam and the United States, the witnesses said.

Black armoured police vans spewed out tear gas when the demonstrators, some wielding sticks, tried to move into the assembly complex.

There were no immediate reports of serious injuries. The domestic Yonhap News Agency said about 10 protesters were arrested.

The demonstrators chanted slogans denouncing U.S. trade pressure on the South and demanding the Seoul parliament block the passage of a government plan to allow imports of foreign rice from next year.

The fresh demonstrations came as the government announced a crackdown on violent anti-government protests after weekend riots, fuelled partly by the North Korean nuclear dispute, left more than 160 police and protesters injured.

The government warned in a statement it would deal sternly with student violence and illegal labour strikes that it said came at a time when people were nervous over North Korea's nuclear intentions.

The statement was issued after Prime Minister Lee Yung-Dag met cabinet ministers to discuss ways to curb the violence and to deal with a proposed major strike by subway and railway workers.



Colombian president-elect Ernesto Samper acknowledges a crowd of followers at a convention centre moments before announcing his victory over his opponent, Andres Pastrana (AFP photo).

Samper elected Colombia president

BOGOTA (AP) — Colombians elected a survivor of an assassination attempt Sunday to be their next president and steer the nation from an era of terror to one many hope will bring an economic boom.

Ernesto Samper, an economist and candidate of the ruling Liberal Party, edged former TV newscaster Andres Pastrana, who also barely survived the Medellin cocaine cartel's reign of terror, by one of the narrowest margins in Colombia's history, according to election returns.

With 97 per cent of ballots

counted, Mr. Samper was leading Mr. Pastrana 49.97 per cent to 48.4 per cent, the elections board announced. The remaining 1.6 per cent represented invalid ballots.

With Mr. Samper ahead by 114,000 votes and 100,000 votes uncounted, it was an insurmountable lead.

"We have achieved victory," an elated Samper told thousands of banner-waving supporters jammed into Bogota's convention centre.

"We have before us a window of opportunity we will take advantage of for the

benefit of all." In a speech to supporters at a hotel, acknowledged defeat.

"I want to congratulate Ernesto Samper for his election as president of the republic," Mr. Pastrana said.

"We wish him the best of luck because we want the best of luck for Colombia."

When polls opened Sunday, President Cesar Gaviria — who is limited to a single term — urged the 17 million registered voters to take advantage of the nation's new climate of peace and cast ballots in high numbers.

Nigerian minister backs Abiola

LAGOS (AFP) — A Nigerian government minister has openly backed opposition leader Moshood Abiola in his claim to be the country's president, in the first such move by a member of the military-led regime.

"We should remember that in whatever we do in this country, this nation is more than any one of us," Planning Minister Silas Danyan said, according to the daily Guardian newspaper Monday.

"If Chief Abiola thinks that he can attain his political objectives through his present stand, we will be proud of him too," the minister said.

On June 11, Mr. Abiola, who on unofficial results won a presidential election on June 12 last year that was subsequently annulled by the junta of the time, threw down a gauntlet to General Sani Abacha's regime by proclaiming himself head of state

and declaring a parallel government.

Mr. Abiola, a Muslim tycoon from the Yoruba south-west, then went into hiding and is known at least twice to have given police the slip.

"We cannot easily forget June 12, it will serve as a constant reminder of what happened and which should not be repeated," Mr. Danyan said. "I am not against June 12, it has taught us a lesson that we should never again in this country cancel a well-conducted and accepted election."

The poll was billed free and fair by international observers, but then junta leader General Ibrahim Babangida alleged there had been irregularities. In August, Gen. Babangida handed over to an unelected civilian administration which Gen. Abacha overthrew in November.

Mr. Danyan had been a

member of Mr. Abiola's Social Democratic Party (SDP), which was abolished like all the other democratic institutions in Nigeria when Gen. Abacha seized power.

He qualified his support for the June 12 election by saying that he opposed any move that could lead to the disintegration of the nation of some 89 million, which has already seen a bloody civil war.

Mr. Abiola has the backing of a nationwide National Democratic Coalition (NADECO). Last week, the powerful Nigerian Labour Congress called on the military to go in another sign of apparent support for him.

Gen. Abacha has made vague promises of restoring democracy, with the first step to be a constitutional conference opening on June 27. The opposition has dismissed it as a farce.

Hopes rise for Sino-U.K. talks

HONG KONG (R) — The Sino-British joint liaison group on Hong Kong's return to China meets for the first time this year Tuesday with hopes raised that at long last progress can be made as tensions cool over Governor Chris Patten's constitutional reforms.

Chinese and British diplomats are working flat out behind the scenes to resolve a seven-year dispute over military sites in Hong Kong so that the Joint Liaison Group (JLG) can produce its first significant agreement for several years.

China has recently made conciliatory comments indicating that while it will never accept Mr. Patten's demo-

cratic reforms, limited cooperation is possible on the huge number of practical issues which need sorting out before the 1997 handover.

British officials say the three-day meeting of the JLG, a diplomatic body charged with arranging a smooth handover, will be the first test of whether the positive comments from Beijing will be translated into concrete progress in the negotiations.

"There are still a large number of complex issues to be resolved in the JLG in the remaining years of British administration," said Bill Dickson, the local spokesman for the British Foreign Office.

"It is absolutely crystal clear that if we are to resolve them in time we will need to shift into top gear now. We therefore very much hope that this session of the JLG will be more productive than its immediate predecessors," he said.

The JLG, which meets three or four times a year, has made almost no significant headway since 1991.

But at least the atmosphere has improved since last year. The last JLG plenary meeting in the colony was held in June 1993 while tempers were still hot over Mr. Patten's proposals, unveiled eight months earlier, to widen the franchise.

N. Zealand headmaster, family killed

DUNEDIN, New Zealand (R) — A school headmaster and his family were shot dead in their home in an unexplained killing spree Monday — New Zealand's third such domestic tragedy in the space of two years, police said.

Police were alerted to the killings at a house in the southern city of Dunedin after the sole surviving family member called for an ambulance.

Police said they were not seeking anyone else over the killings and were looking at murder-suicide as one of the possible scenarios.

The victims were named as Robin Irving Bain, 58, his wife Margaret, 50, and their children Arawa, 20, Laniet, 18, and Stephen, 14.

All were found shot through the head — two in their beds, two beside their

beds and one in the lounge of the ramshackle house, police said. A .22 calibre rifle, fitted with a silencer, was found at the scene.

The alarm was sounded by the surviving son, David, 22, who said he left the house at 5.45 a.m. and discovered the bodies when he returned 45 minutes later after delivering newspapers.

"He became concerned from what he saw. There was some ammunition lying on the floor in his room," detective chief inspector Peter Robinson, heading the inquiry, told Reuters.

"He had a look around and found his mother and then contacted an ambulance. That's what he's saying, whether it's right or not I don't know," Mr. Robinson said.

Mr. Robinson said there appeared to have been a

struggle in the backroom of the house, set among trees in an attractive middle-class suburb overlooking Dunedin Harbour.

Police said 35 detectives and a pathologist were on the team investigating the murders. Detailed inquiries were under way into the family's background and forensic scientists were combing the house and grounds.

Mr. Robinson said police had questioned David Bain at length and would interview him again. The young man who was earlier treated for shock, was spending the night with relatives.

Among local people, the tragedy brought back vivid memories of New Zealand's worst mass killing at nearby Aramoana in 1990. A crazed young man shot and killed 13 people before being shot dead by police.



Thai political activist Chalard Vorachet rests in an iron cage after resuming his hunger strike in front of parliament, three days after surrendering to police to fight charges of sedition. He began his "fast-to-death" campaign for a more democratic constitution on May 25 (AFP photo).

PDP leader appeals for unity ahead of crunch time for Thai coalition

BANGKOK (AFP) — Thai Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai came under renewed pressure Monday as one of his coalition partners debated its future in government and a pro-democracy campaigner resumed a hunger strike in front of parliament.

The Phalang Dharma Party (PDP), a Buddhist component in Mr. Chuan's 21-month-old government, was to vote on whether to stay in the coalition at a meeting which was also to decide on a motion demanding constitutional reform.

Deputy Prime Minister Boonchu Rojanastien, nominal head of the PDP, appealed for the party to rally behind Mr. Chuan, in comments reported by the Bangkok Post Monday.

But party dissidents were still insisting on leaving the government. The Nation reported Chamlong Srimuang, the

former general who is the party's "spiritual" leader, would not rule out the possibility of the coalition's collapse, and seemed to be preparing to resume full control of the PDP.

The PDP meeting was to start at 6:00 p.m. (1100 GMT), a party spokesman said. If the PDP speaks the coalition, Mr. Chuan would have the choice of calling new elections or forming a new alliance.

His government was also confronted Monday by the reappearance of former MP Chalard Vorachet, 51, who resumed a hunger strike in front of parliament to demand democracy reforms.

Last Thursday, Chalard surrendered to police to fight charges of sedition, and was taken to hospital but continued to refuse to take nourishment by mouth.

Mr. Chalard, 51, checked himself out of an intensive

care unit late Sunday and returned to the site outside parliament where he started a "fast-to-death" protest on May 25.

He did not immediately return to the steel cage he had previously occupied, but sat quietly facing the parliament building, security officers there Monday.

Police chief Pratin Santirapap later said there was no evidence to support the sedition charge, which had been filed by a former MP who said Mr. Chalard's demands for a new constitution were an act of treason.

The PDP could boost its campaign if it passes a motion calling for parliament to set up a committee to draw up a new constitution.

The prime minister, head of the Democrat Party, firmly opposes such moves though the PDP radicals and many other groups back Mr. Chalard.

EU countries fight over top Eurocrat post

BRUSSELS (AFP) — The job of Europe's top bureaucrat is up for grabs and some countries of the European Union are fighting for it like dogs over a particularly luscious bone.

EU leaders will try at their six-monthly summit in Greece next Friday and Saturday to name a successor to Jacques Delors, who retires at the end of the year after 10 years at the helm of the EU's executive European Commission.

The man who gets the job — it pays about \$20,000 a month — will play a key role over the next five years in steering a course through the controversial waters of EU integration and enlargement into Eastern Europe.

Mr. Delors himself says that his successor "should be as big a pain in the neck as I am" — a quality necessary to control the EU bureaucracy and match wits and blows with president and prime ministers.

The contest for his job has pitted two of the EU's biggest countries — Germany and France — against the Netherlands. It has also highlighted the role of Germany as the emerging dominant force of the 12-nation union.

The declared candidates are Belgian Prime Minister Jean-Luc Dehaene, outgoing Dutch Prime Minister Ruud Lubbers and the EU's British Trade Commissioner, Sir Leon Brittan.

Mr. Dehaene is considered the leading candidate, because he has the support of Germany and France. Most observers predict a fight between him and Mr. Lubbers, who is less sympathetic to the German-French dominance of the EU.

Sir Leon is given an outside chance as a compromise choice if the fight gets nasty, along with Peter Sutherland, who steered the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) to success last year.

Mr. Lubbers is pushing hard for the commission presidency, established in 1958, because the Netherlands is the only one of the six founder members of the European Community never to have held the post for a full term.

The Dutch see this as an insult. Their only shot at Europe's top job came when the commission's Italian president, Franco Maria Malfatti, resigned in 1972 and Sico Mansholt took over for eight months to the end of his

term.

But the German press is reporting widely that German Chancellor Helmut Kohl holds a grudge against the Dutch candidate because Mr. Lubbers did not give early support for the unification of East and West Germany in 1990.

Diplomats say Germany doesn't want the job because, since reunification, it has become the EU strongman and is wary of being seen as too dominant. So Bonn is sponsoring Mr. Dehaene, who supports its Euro-federalist views.

A wild card is held by the new Italian prime minister, media tycoon Silvio Berlusconi. He has not yet shown whether he intends to break an Italian habit of following the German-French lead.

The successful candidate must have the support of all 12 heads of state and government at the Corfu summit. Mr. Dehaene and Mr. Lubbers will both be there.

If Mr. Lubbers vetoes the other nominees, a decision might have to be put off until later in the year.

Whoever gets the job, in the words of a senior diplomat here, should be "like a dog worrying a bone, not

afraid to hold on. He must have the biggest fists, and not be afraid to deal out smacks to everybody."

That might apply more to Mr. Dehaene, known in Belgium as a political fixer whose favourite tactic is to lock negotiators in a room, with sparse rations, until they have reached a compromise.

The successful candidate will rub shoulders on equal terms with world leaders, even though like Mr. Delors he may never have run for high public office.

Complicating the contest are parallel campaigns to name new heads for other international organisations. EU countries are jockeying for the influence and prestige associated with these jobs.

The secretariat of the EU's council of ministers is looking for a new chief, as is the World Trade Organisation which will replace the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

Other plans ripe for the picking are the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the Western European Union, the EU's developing defence arm. And NATO might soon need a new secretary-general.

Moroccan in shooting drama

BRUSSELS (AFP) — A young Moroccan suffered shotgun wounds at Verviers Sunday during clashes involving up to 400 people following Belgium's 1-0 World Cup win over Morocco. A town official blamed a right-wing activist for the incident in the south of the country. He added the victim, who was hit three times, was not in danger. A policeman received a head injury and eight people were questioned, he added. Other incidents between Belgians and Moroccan residents were reported in Antwerp, where 17 people were questioned, and Brussels, where police closed off a section of the city centre during the trouble.

A tribute to the dead in Sarajevo.

SARAJEVO (AFP) — Mozart's Requiem rang out through the bombed out National Library in Sarajevo Sunday, as local and international singers and musicians paid tribute to the dead, giving hope to the living. Armoured vehicles ringed the library, their guns pointing up into the nearby front lines of the Bosnian Serb sector, and an anti-sniper force deployed around the building. Spanish tenor Jose Carreras and the former conductor of the New York Philharmonic Zubin Mehta joined members of the Sarajevo choir and orchestra for the performance. The Requiem was chosen as a homage to the 10,000 killed in Sarajevo and the tens of thousands killed elsewhere in a country over the past two years, organisers said. Filmed by Bosnian television and re-transmitted live on a dozen foreign stations, the rights to the broadcast were sold to make money for the reconstruction of the city, they said. The audience was kept small in the confined ruins of the library. Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic and the British commander of the U.N. forces in Bosnia, General Michael Rose, attended but the public was kept away. The area has been largely quiet since the Serbs were persuaded to withdraw their heavy weapons from around the town at the end of February, U.N. officials said. Perhaps the concert was a return to a sense of normality for some. It was a "breath of hope," in the city, French U.N. commander for Sarajevo Andre Soubeiran said.

Historian: Early church ceremonies united men

NEW HAVEN, Conn. (AP) — In the middle ages, men who loved each other were commonly united by priests in Christian ceremonies much like weddings between men and women, a historian says in a new book. In 12 years of research that took him to the Vatican library and elsewhere in Europe, John Boswell of Yale University says he found liturgies that joined male couples with invocations to God, the clapping of right hands and kisses to signify the bond. "In almost every age and place the ceremony fulfilled what most people today regard as the essence of marriage: A permanent romantic commitment between two people, witnessed and recognised by the community," Mr. Boswell wrote in "Same-Sex Unions in Premodern Europe."

Other scholars dispute the findings, saying the ceremonies blessed friendships, not gay love, and should not be confused with Christian marriage. Mr. Boswell acknowledges it is impossible to know whether the same-sex relationships included sexual activity. But concludes the ties were stronger and deeper than friendship. His book carries a June 30 publishing date but has been rushed into bookstores. "What he's trying to do is change the way we think about the past," says Vern L. Bullough, a professor emeritus of history at the State University of New York at Buffalo. Prof. Bullough, who has written several texts exploring human sexuality, calls Mr. Boswell brilliant but says Mr. Boswell's personal background — as a gay man and a convert to Catholicism, from the Episcopal Church — may have coloured the research. Ralph Hexter, a professor of comparative literature at the University of Colorado and a longtime friend of Mr. Boswell's, said Mr. Boswell would not allow his own beliefs to cloud his research.

Handwritten text in Arabic script: "كتاب في الفقه"

N. Ireland Protestants urged to embrace peace process

DUBLIN (R) — Irish Foreign Minister Dick Spring urged Northern Ireland's Protestant politicians to support an Anglo-Irish peace drive to end "inane" sectarian killings such as Saturday's massacre of World Cup fans.

Mr. Spring, the deputy prime minister, expressed his "awful sense of revulsion" at the way Protestant UVF guerrillas cut down six innocent Catholics watching Ireland's 1-0 win over Italy in a country pub in Loughinisland.

"All Irish people must feel a sense of shame because of the barbarous cruelty in which these people were shot down, while innocently watching a moment of joy for the country in the World Cup," he told the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC).

The outlawed Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) is killing Catholics at random to sabotage any attempt by Dublin to forge closer links with the British-ruled province envisaged by the six-month-old Anglo-Irish peace plan.

Sources close to the UVF and sister groups say they are determined to derail any attempt in the plan to involve Sinn Féin, political wing of Irish Republican Army (IRA) guerrillas fighting to end British rule of the province.

Mr. Spring appealed to Northern Ireland's Protestant political leaders who want to maintain its 300-year-old union with Britain to back Anglo-Irish efforts to reconvene cross-border peace talks involving all concerned parties.

The so-called three-stranded talks have been in limbo since 1992 but Britain and Ireland are hoping to relaunch them later this year and to get both Protestant and Republican gunmen to end the killing and join the negotiations.

"I would hope that we can recommence the three-stranded talks in a very short period of time. We have got to overcome the baggage of history we all share on this island to sit down together across the table and see if we can reach conclusions."

Mr. Spring's remarks were aimed at Northern Ireland's two main Unionist Protestant political parties which want the province to stay part of Britain and which are deeply suspicious of Irish involvement in any talks about their future.

He called on Unionist politicians to try to persuade the 60 per cent Protestant majority that peace moves did not threaten their British status and that there would be no forced attempt to reunite Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic.

"There should be no fear of coercion or threat from the Republic of Ireland and they should be able to come and have discussions with us free from any fear," Mr. Spring said.

The mainstream Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) has given the initiative only grudging support while the hardline Democratic Unionist Party of Ian Paisley vocalises opposition any part for the Dublin government in Northern Ireland's affairs.

The weekend killing was staged at an emotionally-charged moment when millions across the island were glued to their television sets to watch the only team in the British and Irish islands to take part in the World Cup in the United States.

It was also timed to harden attitudes by leaders of the IRA and Sinn Féin, who are due to give their final verdict in the next three weeks on the Anglo-Irish Downing Street Declaration.

Britain and Ireland hope Sinn Féin will accept the offer of a seat at peace talks if the IRA ends its 25-year war.

Mr. Spring and other Irish government ministers believe an IRA ceasefire would silence the UVF guns but sources close to the Protestant extremists said they would fight against any attempt by Dublin to shape Northern Ireland's political future.

Sinn Féin sources said at the weekend that the party's response was being hampered at present and that the next two weeks could have a crucial effect on the peace process.



A Rwandan militiaman wounded by rebel mortar shrapnel is carried to the Red Cross hospital by a comrade (AFP photo).

Angolan foes fight on as diplomats approach final peace talks hurdles

HARARE (AFP) — The civilian death toll from the bitter civil war in Angola, one of Africa's bloodiest conflicts, increased Monday as negotiators and diplomats prepared to approach the final hurdles in marathon peace talks.

Heavy fighting in several regions between government troops and rebels of the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) prevented any resumption of relief activities on which some two million people depend.

In the embattled central city of Cuito, 40 people were killed and 60 others wounded Sunday alone, according to official radio Monday. Food stocks for civilians have run out, the U.N. World Food Programme (WFP) said.

For days, UNITA artillery has been pounding the town of Ndalando in Cuanza Norte province, which was retaken by the army some weeks ago, and the rebels have stepped up an offensive against Malanje in the north, the radio said.

Government forces meanwhile attacked UNITA positions at Seles, Waku-Kungo and Konda, in Cuanza-Sul province, the rebel Radio Vorgan reported Monday. The fierce battles have for almost a month prevented the supply of food to Malanje and Uige in the north, Cuito and Huambo in the central

highlands, which is Angola's second city and UNITA's stronghold. Weekly airlifts of 15,000 tonnes of food to these towns had previously been the biggest such operation ever undertaken by the WFP.

As the fighting raged on, marathon peace talks in the Zambian capital Lusaka appeared to be entering their final phase, with negotiators due to return to their seats Tuesday.

Most of the outstanding problems, such as UNITA participation in a future government of national unity, are on the way to being resolved, according to the main mediator, U.N. special envoy Alioune Blondin Beye.

Mr. Beye went to Huambo at the weekend to brief UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi and also talked to President Jose Eduardo Dos Santos. He later proved upbeat, saying that 90 per cent of the difficulties had been overcome.

The negotiators are as of Tuesday expected to move on to the thorny issue of the status of Mr. Savimbi and other leaders of UNITA, which plunged Angola back into civil war after losing U.N.-supervised general elections in September 1992. Since the latest talks began last Nov. 15, the rival sides have agreed on major military and legal issues, including

the uniting of their armies, forming a new police force and the status of the UNITA members elected to parliament and of the rebel radio.

But the government has issued a new warning that Luanda will make no further concessions beyond "what has already been proposed," according to Deputy Foreign Minister Joao Miranda.

UNITA spokesman and chief negotiator Jorge Valentim has called for a "solid discussion" of the key issue of UNITA's role in government and accused the ruling People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) of playing with words.

Under pressure from the international community, particularly the troika of former colonial power Portugal and the United States and Russia, which in cold war days respectively backed UNITA and the MPLA, the foes have little time to iron out the problems.

The mandate of the U.N. mission in Angola, UNAVEM II, expires on June 30 and diplomats close to the talks said coming days will be critical.

But it will not be possible so swiftly to end the distrust that has built up between the sides, at war since independence in 1975, apart from the pre-election period after a first peace pact was signed in May 1991.

China calls for help as flood toll hits 438

BEIJING (AFP) — China appealed for international help Monday to combat floods that struck the south of the country with the loss of more than 400 lives, and contemplated desperate measures to protect the wealthy province of Guangdong.

As Beijing prepared to dispatch a task force to the stricken region, a provisional toll released by the ministry of civil affairs said 438 people had been killed and 6,470 injured, and 48 million people affected, across six provinces.

Worst hit was Guangdong province, where 134 people were confirmed dead and 52 are still missing, the state media said. Hong Kong newspapers described the floods as triggered by successive days of torrential rains which persisted Monday — as the worst in half a century.

In central Hunan, 120 people had perished, the state media said, adding 82 had died in southern Guangxi, 32 in eastern Zhejiang, 30 in southeastern Jiangxi and 20 in southeastern Fujian.

In Beijing, Prime Minister Li Peng chaired an emergency meeting of state councilors and ministry officials, TV evening news reported.

He said Vice Premier Zou Jiahua would lead a central government task delegation to Guangdong, Guangxi, Hunan and Jiangxi to help with relief work, listing priorities as protecting the Pearl River delta, rescuing people, ensuring food supplies and preventing epidemics.

Mr. Li and President Jiang Zemin telephoned the flood-hit provinces with messages of sympathy, the news report said.

The Civil Affairs Ministry said some 482,000 houses had been destroyed and three million hectares (7.4 million acres) of cultivated land inundated, putting the cost of damage at 16.86 billion yuan (\$2 billion).

Muslim separatist leader shot dead in Kashmir

SRINAGAR (AFP) — A top Kashmiri Muslim separatist leader and religious figure was shot dead by unidentified gunmen in the strife-torn Indian state of Kashmir Monday, police said.

Gazi Nissar, 50, who headed the fundamentalist group Umat-e-Islami, or Islamic Community Front, was slain in the town of Dayalgam in the southern Kashmir district of Anantnag, police said in this Kashmir summer capital.

Tens of thousands of people took to the streets of Anantnag, Dayalgam and other nearby towns following the murder to mourn the death of the Islamic priest, scholar and politician, police said.

Mr. Nissar's body was paraded through the streets to shouts of "Allah-u-Akbar" (God is great) and "Catch the killers," police said, and shops and offices closed down to protest the assassination.

The Indian security forces accused the dominant Kashmiri Muslim militant organisation Hizbul Mujahideen of carrying out the killing, while Kashmiri Muslim separatist groups said it was the handiwork of Indian agents.

Verana Aivelli, the government intelligence chief in Kashmir, charged that militants had told Mr. Nissar to attend an important meeting and then gunned him down.

But Hizbul Mujahideen supreme commander Syed Salahuddin denied that his group was involved in the killing and said it was staged by Indian agents to malign the Kashmiri Muslim separatist movement.

"Nissar was an important pillar of the ongoing movement," he told AFP by telephone. "These government agents have deprived us of another true friend."

Jamat-i-Islami, the political wing of the Hizbul Mujahideen, also denounced the slaying and said government agents were responsible.

Mr. Nissar was one of five Muslim leaders freed by the Indian authorities in 1992 after serving two years in prison.

He shot to prominence in 1986 when he defied a government ban on the slaughtering of cows, which are sacred to India's Hindu majority.

His Muslim United Front took part in 1987 state elections which were marred by widespread allegations of fraud by the Congress (I) Party and its National Conference ally.

The armed struggle against Indian rule which erupted two years after the elections has left nearly 10,000 people dead in Kashmir, India's only Muslim-majority state. Kashmir's ownership is disputed by India and Pakistan.

Clinton calls Simpson case 'genuine tragedy'

WASHINGTON (R) — President Bill Clinton Monday said the murder case involving U.S. football legend O.J. Simpson was a "genuine tragedy."

Mr. Clinton's comment, in an NBC Today show interview, came several hours before Mr. Simpson was to be arraigned in Los Angeles on charges of stabbing to death his glamorous ex-wife and her male companion.

"It's a genuine tragedy. In some ways, it's a story as old as time and in some ways it's a modern story," Mr. Clinton said when asked about the case.

"that two people were killed, children were robbed of a mother, families lost loved ones and a man widely admired in this country is now caught in the web of a terrible tragedy."

He also implied that he joined millions of other Americans last Friday night watching live television coverage of a dramatic police pursuit of Simpson that ended with the 46-year-old athlete surrendering.

"I have to say after we all watched it in excruciating detail last weekend, the time has now come for the legal process to take its course."

Children, wounded evacuated across Rwandan battlelines

KIGALI (R) — Children screaming in agony were evacuated across battlelines in the Rwandan capital Kigali Monday after another night of heavy bombardment by rebels pushing in on remaining government positions.

About 150 victims of three days of shelling, including about 30 young orphans, were evacuated from the main Red Cross Hospital in the city centre to the sector controlled by the rebel Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF).

"We have to try and make some space here, it's just overflowing. We have had so many casualties come in over the last few days," said American Doctor John Sundin.

He said between 500 and 600 fresh casualties had stretched the makeshift hospital's resources to breaking point.

The high-risk evacuation operation took place after the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the U.N.'s depleted force in the capital had received assurances from both sides the convoy of four lorries would not be attacked.

The patients, many severely wounded and in a state of shock, were helped out of the hospital by Red Cross workers and into the waiting vehicles.

A five-year old girl, both her legs amputated below the knee, stared blankly into space as small arms fire crackled around the lush, green hills of the central African city.

Nearby, Ntumbiri, three-years-old, cried out for his dead mother, massacred by Hutu death squads a few days earlier.

"It's just unbelievable, in-

credible what we're seeing here," said Eric Vreede, a surgeon with the international humanitarian charity Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF).

The convoy wound its way through wrecked streets and past roadblocks manned by government troops and their allies of the dreaded Interahamwe militia to the King Feisal Centre on the northeastern outskirts.

The centre has been hastily set up by MSF and the Red Cross. A Red Cross worker was killed Sunday when the main hospital was hit by a bomb and several others were wounded.

Aid workers hope to evacuate many more people over the next few days.

Overnight Sunday, the RPF threw volleys of mortars and shells at government positions.

On Mount Kigali, the last piece of high ground held by the government, muzzle flashes from machineguns and mortars flickered. Tracers lit up the night sky and machine gun fire rattled around the city.

"There was a lot of fighting but there hasn't been a significant change in territory," U.N. Assistance Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR) military spokesman Major Jean-Guy Plante told reporters.

The RPF, which now controls about two-thirds of Kigali, has also launched small raids into government areas to rescue members of the Tutsi tribe from which they draw most of their support.

Several thousand are trapped in the Sainte Famille Complex in the city centre. A planned evacuation Sunday

was called off after a promised truce failed to materialise but UNAMIR said it restarted evacuations Monday.

France pushed ahead with its plans for military intervention to try to end the massacres in which as many as 500,000 people are now believed to have been killed.

The French embassy in Nairobi said a French envoy left the Kenyan capital Monday for Rwanda to explain France's plans, which the rebels strongly oppose.

Jean-Michel Marlaud, France's ambassador to Kigali whose mission was closed nearly two months ago, flew to Entebbe, Uganda.

RPF leader Paul Kagame has said he will not meet the envoy and it is not at all clear if he will even be allowed across the border from Uganda.

"We intend to oppose the French intervention in this conflict by all means available to us because of the role played in Rwanda by the French in the past," he told Radio French Internationale.

The RPF rebels, who are winning the war against the Hutu-dominated government army, are distrustful of France.

They say its hands are bloodied by support of the former government of President Juvenal Habyarimana, whose assassination on April 6 triggered the frenzy of bloodletting and propelled the rebels into the capital.

U.N. forces on the ground number just 450 and UNAMIR Commander Major-General Romeo Dallaire said Sunday it would take weeks for the more than 5,000 reinforcements approved by the U.N. Security Council to de-

ploy. UNAMIR said Monday it was still unable to reopen Kigali Airport for supply planes because it does not have sufficient security guarantees from the warring parties following the mortaring of the runway two weeks ago.

South African Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu said Monday France should help fund an all-African intervention force in Rwanda rather than send French troops there.

France is unlikely to win troop commitments from European allies for the risky mission it plans to stop massacres in Rwanda, despite pleas from Paris for help, diplomats said Monday.

Ambassadors from the nine-nation Western European Union (WEU) defence group met in Brussels Tuesday to consider the French plan. A similar meeting last Friday failed to produce pledges from French allies that they would send troops.

While some have offered financial or logistical support, none seems willing to offer forces for a mission that could involve combat in a faraway country where they have no major interests, diplomats said.

"I would be very surprised if anyone else joins the French in what will be a very dangerous mission," said one Brussels-based diplomat from a WEU member state.

At Friday's meeting, Italy was the only country which mentioned the possibility of sending troops. Italian officials say that while Rome does not exclude taking part, it would do so only if other allies joined. That now looks highly unlikely.

Japan coalition tries to mend ties with Socialists

TOKYO (R) — Prime Minister Tsutomu Hata's Japanese minority government, living under daily threat of defeat in a no-confidence vote, formally decided Monday to try and mend its broken alliance with the Socialists.

Representatives of parties in the ruling coalition agreed to seek policy talks with the Socialist Party as soon as the long-delayed state budget cleared parliament later this week.

"Now that the time is running short, we must make a

more aggressive approach to the Socialist Party and ask it to return to the coalition," a coalition official said.

The unreliable Socialists, who quit the alliance the day Mr. Hata became prime minister in April, hold the key to his government's survival.

With their backing Mr. Hata could face down the no-confidence motion the main opposition Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) has vowed to submit after passage of the budget.

But there are still deep policy disagreements between the government and the Socialists, notably on taxation and North Korean policy.

Socialist Chairman Tomiichi Murayama raised the stakes further Monday. Kyodo News Agency said he warned Mr. Hata that if no common policy platform could be reached and the government fell, his party could join with the LDP to

form a stop-gap administration.

The coalition official refused to say if Monday's coalition meeting had considered the possibility of approaching the LDP as a possible partner in a new government.

Ichiro Ozawa, a key coalition policymaker, has ruled out extending a wholesale invitation to the LDP, the conservative party which ruled Japan for 38 years until the fledgling coalition toppled it in June 1993.

French Socialists in crisis as presidential poll looms

PARIS (AFP) — The resignation of party leader Michel Rocard has plunged France's main opposition Socialist Party into one of its most serious crises ever just 10 months before elections to succeed President Francois Mitterrand.

Mr. Rocard, a 63-year-old former prime minister, stepped down Sunday after losing a vote of confidence at a meeting of the party's Executive Committee.

The Socialists now face the arduous task of finding a suitable candidate to field in the presidential race. Most analysts agree that Mr. Rocard's departure has cleared the way for the outgoing president of the European Commission, Jacques Delors.

Mr. Delors, whose current mandate in Brussels ends on Dec. 31, has steadfastly refused to commit himself to returning to Paris to run for France's highest office.

However, he is now under strong pressure to do so given that he is considered in political circles as the only Socialist with the status needed to have some chance of winning against conservative Prime Minister Edouard Balladur or neo-Gaullist Jacques Chirac.

According to the latest opinion polls, Mr. Balladur would beat Mr. Delors to the presidency, but Mr. Delors would beat Mr. Chirac.

The relative wealth of potential candidates on the French right highlights the shortage of plausible candidates on the left, where the Socialist Party lacks a charismatic leader to represent it in the presidential contest next April.

Observers agree too that it needs to modify its policies, notably in light of the disastrous 14.5 per cent it scored in the June 12 European parliamentary elections.

The lack of appeal of the mainstream Socialists was further highlighted by the success of a list led by Bernard Tapie, a businessman-turned-politician and former Socialist minister, who took a large chunk of the traditional left-wing vote with his populist approach.



Former French parliament speaker Henri Emmanuelli (left) arrives at the Socialist Party executive committee meeting. Mr. Emmanuelli was named interim party leader replacing

Michel Rocard who lost a confidence vote at the meeting following the party's drubbing in last week's European elections (AFP photo)

Michel Rocard who lost a confidence vote at the meeting following the party's drubbing in last week's European elections (AFP photo)

Former Socialist premier Laurent Fabius, who has barely concealed his opposition to Mr. Rocard, has openly declared his support for a Delors candidacy.

Mr. Mitterrand, who some analysts say "engineered" Mr. Rocard's downfall, is also thought to favour Mr. Delors.

Meanwhile the Socialist executive named former parliament speaker Henri Emmanuelli, 49, as acting party leader.

Mr. Emmanuelli said he would steer the party "sharply left," adding that he would defend the move at a special congress scheduled for the autumn during which the party would set out its new policies.

If the "sharply left" tendency is adopted, Mr. Delors is unlikely to agree to run in the presidential race, observers say.

In a fluid situation there was plenty of scope for further jockeying over the summer as the party's various factions attempted to promote their standard bearers to positions of best advantage.

Meanwhile Mr. Balladur cancelled a prime time television interview Monday after it turned into a battle for viewers with Mr. Chirac.

Mr. Balladur said last Friday that he would explain his plans for the next few months in the main news bulletin Monday on state television channel France-2.

Private channel TF1 said at the weekend it would interview Mr. Chirac, the Paris mayor, at the same time live from the capital's City Hall.

"Numerous political statements have been made over the past few days and to avoid adding to the information and commentaries the prime minister has decided to ask France-2 editors to postpone the programme scheduled tonight," Mr. Balladur's office said in a statement.

A bitter behind-the-scenes struggle is underway between Mr. Balladur and Mr. Chirac ahead of their expected showdown for the succession to Socialist President Francois Mitterrand in next year's election.

Both men belong to the Gaullist Rally For The Republic (RPR) party, but Mr. Balladur, who has not said outright that he will run, has taken the lead in opinion polls over RPR leader Chirac.

French Interior Minister Charles Pasqua Sunday resurrected the idea of holding

a primary election to choose the governing rightwing coalition's candidate for presidential voting next year.

Mr. Pasqua noted that the parties in the coalition — the Rally For the Republic (RPR) and the Union for French Democracy, headed by Valéry Giscard d'Estaing — had made the holding of a presidential primary part of the alliance's platform for legislative voting in March, 1993.

The right went on to trounce the then-ruling Socialists in that election. But the primary was agreed on in principle only, with no detailed planning.

Mr. Pasqua, speaking on the French television station France 2, said, "If Mr. Chirac and Mr. Giscard d'Estaing, who signed the agreement, asked (the government) to take the necessary measures, I would do it," Mr. Pasqua said.

"In a primary, there would be nothing to prevent eight or ten candidates from taking part in the first round," Mr. Pasqua said, he refused to rule out running himself.

French presidential candidates are currently chosen by their party leadership. The presidential election is scheduled for May of next year.

Dahlin's late goal salvages 2-2 draw for Sweden against Cameroon

PASADENA, Calif. (AP) — The Swedes hate losing World Cup games 2-1. On Sunday, they were just 16 minutes away from a fourth straight heartbreaking setback by that dreadful score.

But striker Martin Dahlin's 75th minute goal salvaged a 2-2 draw in the Group B opener against Cameroon. It was Sweden's first point in the World Cup finals since a 1-1 tie with Brazil in Argentina in 1978.

"In the last World Cup I was young and I was injured and not in form, so it was a big disappointment," said Dahlin. "And now I have scored my first World Cup goal so I'm very, very happy."

"One point is OK for us. We still have the chance to reach the second round."

Dahlin's goal came after Henrik Larsson, who came in for Jesper Blomqvist in midfield just 14 minutes earlier, hit the crossbar with a powerful right-foot drive from 30 metres. Dahlin chested the ball down and beat goalkeeper Joseph-Antoine Bell with a left-foot shot.

Roger Ljung, a defender, gave Sweden the lead with a header in the seventh minute. David Embley tied it with a controversial goal in the 31st and Francois Omam-Biyick, the other Cameroon striker, made it 2-1 early in the second half.

"It was a match of changing fortunes and shifting situations in extremes," said

Cameroon's coach Henri Michel. "In the closing minutes my team lost the concentration."

Dahlin was Sweden's goalscoring hero in the qualifying phase with seven goals, but he went scoreless in his last four exhibitions going into the World Cup. And he struggled early in the game up front against a tough Cameroonian defence.

The heat (30 Celsius, 86 Fahrenheit) also was a negative factor early on for the Swedes, who practiced a week in much cooler weather in San Diego before going to Los Angeles five days ago.

"The first 20 minutes were terrible," Dahlin said. "It was very, very tough. I felt it in my legs. It was hard to run. It took a long time to adjust to the heat."

It took the Cameroonians only 21 seconds to create the first dangerous chance in the game, a shot that goalkeeper Thomas Ravelli had some problems with because he was facing the sun.

But it was the Swedes who dominated early and deservedly took the early lead before a crowd of 83,959 at the Rose Bowl, including several hundred Swedish fans, but about 8,000 short of capacity.

Ljung, who played every minute in all 10 qualifiers, scored his first World Cup goal as he rose high to beat Bell with a close-range header near the far post after a free kick taken by Jonas Thern.

Embley tied it with a goal that was as much fluke as controversial. It came after Swedish defender Patrick Andersson failed to clear the ball inside the penalty area.

Marc Vivien Foe, Cameroon's offensive threat, blocked Andersson's attempted clearance, got a lucky bounce and then had a clear path towards the goal before passing to the unmarked Embley. Embley, who appeared to be in an offside position, then tapped the ball into the nets.

Peruvian referee Alberto Tejada Noriega first made the offside call, but then changed his mind.

"It was a very strange behaviour by the referee," Swedish coach Tommy Svensson said. "First he whistled for offside himself without looking at the linesman. Then he talked it over with the linesman, asking him about his opinion. I couldn't see if it was offside or not. But the referee's action was strange."

Omam-Biyick, who was Cameroon's top player along with veteran Roger Milla four years ago in Italy when the "Indomitable Lions" became the first African team to reach the quarterfinals in World Cup history, made it 2-1 just one minute into the second half.

A long pass by Rigobert Son Bahang set up Omam-Biyick's goal. With the ball sailing upfield, Omam-Biyick broke behind two defenders and tapped the ball just under



Swedish defender Joachim Björklund tries to tackle Cameroon's captain Stephen Tataw during their World Cup match Sunday at the Rose Bowl (APF photo)

the left arm of Ravelli, who was making his 11th appearance for Sweden.

Omam-Biyick, who scored the game-winning for Cameroon in the famous 1-0 victory over then defending champion Argentina in the opening game of the 1990 World Cup finals, played well throughout opening the Swedes.

Michel, who was the winning coach when France won the 1984 Olympic soccer title at the Rose Bowl, said Omam-Biyick probably deserved the game MVP award as much as Dahlin.

Late goal gives Norway 1st World Cup victory

WASHINGTON (AP) — Second-half substitute Kjetil Rekdal scored with five minutes remaining moments after Erik Thorstvedt foiled three Mexican chances to give Norway a 1-0 victory in their Group E World Cup opener Sunday.

Rekdal, who came on for Erik Mykland in the 79th minute, beat his defender and slid a low shot under Jorge Campos from the right side of the goal box.

Mexico missed its final chance in the first minute of injury time when Luis Alves Zague's diving header hit the right post, bounced off his head and was cleared on a header by Henning Berg.

"I'm proud and happy and very tired, too," said Norwegian coach Egil Olsen. "I know we could have lost two goals in the last minute. I know we were lucky."

The victory, Norway's first ever in World Cup play, tied it with Ireland after the group after one game. Ireland beat Italy 1-0 on Saturday.

Mexico seemed right at home in the sizzling stadium, and the majority of the crowd of 52,395 were behind the Mexican team — most clad in red, white and green.

Bot Norway's few thousand supporters were the ones cheering and dancing in the aisles at game's end.

Norway has had plenty to cheer about this year, considering the country put on a flawless Winter Olympics and

performed well in the games.

"This is the best start we could hope for," Rekdal said.

It took the Norwegians more than five decades to get back into the World Cup after their lone appearance in 1938. Now that they've got a victory, they're looking to build on it.

"I'm extremely pleased and happy to get the goal," Rekdal said. "We won today, but there's still a long way to go."

Rekdal's goal came after Mexico applied pressure midway through the second half and appeared to be taking control of the game. Mexico created three chances in four minutes, forcing Thorstvedt into diving saves on two of them.

Luis Garcia, Ignacio Ambriz and Hugo Sanchez each narrowly missed chances in the 74th, 76th and 77th minutes.

Thorstvedt parried away Garcia's blast from the top of the penalty area, knocked away Ambriz's 25-metre shot and watched Sanchez's bicycle kick go wide from 7 metres to keep Mexico scoreless.

After Norway went ahead, Jesus Ramon Ramirez led Norway back, chipping a ball to Zague, whose diving header collided with the post.

Norway went ahead when Jan Fjortoft gained control of the ball near the penalty

area, Rekdal took it off his foot and charged past Mexico's Claudio Suarez before shooting the ball into the left corner of the net.

The 36-degree Celsius (98 Fahrenheit) and high humidity led to Olsen's decision to remove Mykland for Rekdal.

"It was better to put someone in with fresh legs when the team was so tired," he said. "Some of the players couldn't stand on their feet after the game. Now they are walking."

Despite being considered a slight underdog, Norway had the better of play and used its stronger lineup to outmuscle the Mexicans.

In the first half Norway had a goal disallowed and had the better of the goal scoring chances.

Fjortoft collided with Campos as they both leaped for a high throw in the 23rd minute. The ball rattled through a maze of legs before ending up in the goal, but Hungarian referee Sandor Puhl waved off the score because of dangerous play.

The Norwegians had two more good scoring chances in the five minutes before halftime.

Fjortoft volleyed a hard shot from the right corner of the goalbox to the 41st that Campos hit in the hands and deflected over the net.

Rune Bratseth four minutes later sent a diving header just wide and high of the opposite post.



Mexico's Luis Alves (L) and Norway's Alf Inge Haaland collide as they try to gain possession of the ball during their first round World Cup match Sunday at Washington's RFK Stadium (APF photo).

FIFA clarifies new tackling rules

DALLAS (R) — FIFA Sunday clarified confusion over which tackles from behind warranted a red card at the World Cup.

Sepp Blatter, general secretary of the world soccer body, dismissed any suggestions that referees were not following their instructions to send off players who committed violent tackles from behind.

There have been a number of incidents in matches so far in which players have tackled from behind but have not been punished, prompting some confusion.

"So far, from the reports we have received from the referees' inspectors and the commission, we are satisfied with the way the referees apply our instructions, and also the linesmen," Blatter told reporters.

He clarified pre-

tournament explanations of the type of tackle from behind that would lead to a red card would only be issued if the tackling player had no realistic chance of winning the ball.

Originally FIFA said any tackle from behind that was considered violent would lead to a dismissal.

FIFA President Joao Havelange said four days before the finals began that any referee who did not show a red card for a tackle from behind would be on the first plane home.

Blatter also said before the soccer began that a tackle from behind would mean an automatic sending off.

But Sunday he said: "What we want to avoid is these no-chance situations of the

attacker going away and the defender attempting not to take the ball, but to stop the player from behind. This is what we want to take out of the game."

"If the tackling player does not touch the ball, then he should be sent off. If he takes the ball away then obviously he has played the ball."

"We have shown the referees a lot of examples of what we mean, where there was not a chance for the player to win the ball, especially with sliding tackles at the man with the ball."

Blatter said FIFA was pleased with the standard as refereeing.

"It is absolutely for us such a pleasure when, after what we have done to improve refereeing over the past three years,

NEWS IN BRIEF

Irish odds shorten

LONDON (AP) — The Republic of Ireland has shortened a 16-1 bet to win the World Cup after its 1-0 win over Italy in New York Saturday. British bookmakers Ladbrokes has moved the Irish from 25-1, while Italy has eased from 5-1 to 8-1. Following its shock 3-1 win over Colombia, Romania has moved from 40S to 33S, while the South Americans eased from 7-1 to 12-1. Germany and Brazil remain equal favourites at 3-1. The host country, the U.S., has lengthened from 89-1 to 125-1, and Norway shortened from 40-1 to 25 following a \$5,000 (\$7,500) plunge. Spain is the best-backed team in the cup, having moved from 22-1 early last week to 16-1, while Saudi Arabia remains on 500-1 with a 1cns £10.097 (\$15) wager placed on it.

China warns fans: Keep it quiet

BEIJING (AP) — China put the brakes on World Cup fever Monday, asking soccer fans to turn their TVs down low and desist from shouting "goal" late at night. China didn't qualify for the quadrennial event, but that has not stopped millions of Chinese fans from staying up at night to watch the matches live on state-run television. But in a front-page commentary, the Communist Party newspaper People's Daily asked soccer fans who are burning the midnight oil to remember their neighbours and keep the noise down. "Keep the TV down low. When you see a great goal, keep your emotions under control. Don't shout loudly or applaud," it said in its article titled: "A reminder to soccer-supporting friends." Then, the newspaper warned, there's the danger of red-eye from soccer fever. "You must show some control, and not let it affect your work. You must especially guard against accidents happening because of lack of sleep," it said. The time difference between China and the United States means that many matches are broadcast in the small hours of the morning.

Morocco first to use 3 sub rule

ORLANDO, Florida (APF) — Morocco became the first country to make three substitutions in a World Cup match when they replaced their goalkeeper against Belgium Sunday. FIFA decided that for this tournament injured goalkeepers could be substituted even when two outfield

players had already been replaced. When goalkeeper Khalil Azmi was injured in a collision with Belgium's Josp Weber in the 88th minute Morocco were able to send on Zakaria Alaoui. They had already replaced Mustapha Al Hadaoui with Ahmad Bahja and Mohammad Chaouch with Aziz Samadi.

Italy ponder mystery of missing fans

MARTINSVILLE, New Jersey (R) — Embarrassed Italians were pondering the mystery of the missing tifosi (fans) Sunday after a no-show from the residents of Little Italy at their match with Ireland. The Irish scored a narrow 1-0 win on the pitch but could claim a walkover off it as the tens of thousands of green-clad fans turned the match into the equivalent of a home game for coach Jack Charlton and his team. Italy expected equal backing from the huge Italo-American community in the New York area but it failed to materialise. "There were a lot of Italians in the stadium too... it's just they weren't as well choreographed as the Irish," soccer federation spokesman Antonello Valentini said Sunday. The Irish outnumbered Italians by more than three-to-one in the crowd of almost 75,000 at the Giants Stadium in East Rutherford, just outside New York.

Heat exhaustion fells 55

PASADENA, California (AP) — The southern California sun proved to be more of a menace than soccer hooligans at the first World Cup game at the Rose Bowl. Police say 55 people were treated for heat exhaustion during Saturday's game when 92,000 fans crammed into the stadium to watch Romania upset Colombia 3-1. The temperature soared to 31 degrees Celsius (88 Fahrenheit) in the city 15 kilometres (10 miles) north of downtown Los Angeles, according to the National Weather Service. On Sunday, fans flocked to the Rose Bowl for another game pitting Sweden against Cameroon. The first game went smoothly except for 38 arrests for ticket scalping, said police who confiscated 220 tickets and an undetermined amount of cash. Some shoving and pushing occurred outside the stadium as hundreds of people waited, some impatiently, for up to 1½ hours for shuttle buses to take them to far-flung parking areas, said police Cmdr. Mary Schander. The bus arrangements were made by the World Cup. Schander said.

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Maradona leads Argentina in his fourth World Cup

FOXBORO, Massachusetts (R) — Diego Maradona confounds his many critics by leading Argentina in his fourth World Cup, opening against debutants Greece in a Group D game at Foxboro Stadium Tuesday.

The stocky star of Argentina's 1986 triumph, so often written off since defeat in the 1990 final as he indulged in drugs, failed to keep fit and fought with his clubs and — once with an air gun — the media, can set a record for World Cup appearance if he plays in all three first-round matches.

Argentina will be looking to capitalise on the still considerable skill of Maradona to feed the dangerous strike pairing of 1990 veteran Claudio Caniggia and Gabriel Batistuta.

"He's still the best player in the world. We'll be waiting for the balls from Diego's magic left foot to score," said Caniggia, also back from a drugs ban and set to play despite a bruised toe in his left foot, with a painkiller if necessary.

Coach Alfio Basile, heavily criticised back home for defensive tactics that almost cost Argentina a passage to the U.S. finals, is betting firmly on attack knowing a victory in the opening game against the group's weakest side is crucial.

His opposite number Alkatas Panagoulas said Argentina had much better players



Today's matches,

Group D: Argentina vs. Greece in Boston at 19:35 Amman time.
Group C: Germany vs. Spain in Chicago at 23:00 Amman time.
Group D: Nigeria vs. Bulgaria in Dallas at 02:30 (Wednesday) Amman time.

than Greece, but that they would feel the pressure of their country's expectations.

"If they don't score in the first 20 minutes, we will gain confidence and it will become more difficult for Argentina to win," said Panagoulas, taking heart from some astonishing upsets in the first few days of the tournament.

Veteran defensive midfielder Panayotis Tsalouhides is expected to have the task of picking up Maradona in the last quarter of the field. Stoppers Yannis Kalitzakis and Thanasis Kolitsidakis will take Caniggia and Batistuta.

Panagoulas is expected to pack his defence and midfield and leave it to lone striker Nikos Machlas, 21 last Thurs-

day, to try to eke out a chance or two and make the most of them.

Basile may have plenty of individual talent in his squad, but he has to hope they gel after fitful recent performances.

The South American champions go into the match with a record of 23 wins and 17 draws in 44 matches under Basile since the 1990 World Cup final. They have never met Greece.

They will play with a classic back four, in which Oscar Ruggeri wins an Argentine record 95th cap, and a ball-winning and playmaking pair of Real Madrid's new signing Fernando Redondo and Diego Simeone of Sevilla.

Luis Islas of Independiente looks set to take over in goal from 1990 penalty shootout hero Sergio Goycochea.

In an also European-based attacking quartet — apart from the clubless Maradona — Caniggia's Roma teammate Abel Balbo, normally a striker, will play a more withdrawn role helping his captain.

Basile's squad have worked hard on their fitness in the last two weeks. Maradona and Balbo are expected to get back and help Redondo and Simeone to regain possession when opponents take the ball.

They will need to pace themselves in the intense heat. The match kicks off 12.35 p.m. local time, when



Diego Maradona

temperatures in recent days have been well above 90 degrees Fahrenheit (30 Celsius) in the Boston area.

Probable teams:
Argentina — 12-Luis Islas 4-Roberto Sensi, 13-Fernando Caceres, 6-Oscar Ruggeri, 3-Jose Chamot 14-Diego Simeone, 5-Fernando Redondo, 10-Diego Maradona, 19-Abel Balbo, 7-Claudio Caniggia, 9-Gabriel Batistuta.

Greece — 1-Antonis Minou 4-Stelios Manolas 2-Stratos Apostolakis, 5-Yannis Kalitzakis, 3-Thanasis Kolitsidakis 17-Minas Hatzides, 6-Panayotis Tsalouhides, 8-Nikos Nioplias, 19-Savvas Kofides, 11-Nikos Tziantakis 9-Nikos Machlas. Referee: Arturo Angeles (United States).

'Nigeria poised for World Cup triumph'

DALLAS (R) — Cameroon blazed the World Cup trail for black Africa four years ago but Nigeria believe they will be the ones to take the trophy home from America.

While most countries are reluctant to predict anything, Nigeria's players and Dutch coach are oozing confidence.

"We are here to win the World Cup," said coach Clement Westerhof. "Pressure? We don't know what that is."

African soccer came of age at the 1990 World Cup when Cameroon reached the quarter-finals and served notice that the continent would one day triumph.

If Westerhof is to be believed, that time has already come.

And it is his Nigerian side — crowned African champions in April — who will do it, not fellow qualifiers Cameroon.

"When I came to Nigeria five years ago I saw people playing football everywhere on small patches of land, under bridges, and I was impressed with the way they handled the ball. I was a footballer and they could do things I couldn't," he said.

"I knew if I could mix European tactics with what they already had, and bring in discipline, I could make a world champion team we could reach for the sky. That's what I have been doing for five years and that's why we are here now."

The shadow of Cameroon 1990 hangs heavy over Niger-

ia. Everyone wants to know if Nigeria will set USA '94 alive the way their neighbours illuminated Italia '90.

"We respect Cameroon. They did very well in Italy. But we want to do better here and I know we can do better," said Westerhof, who has coached Dutch clubs Feyenoord and Vitesse Arnhem.

"You must believe in yourself, and we believe in ourselves. Nigeria are African champions and we want to make the nation proud of us here."

"We are well prepared and have the team and players to be the surprise of this World Cup. No-one should underestimate us."

Westerhof, who calls himself a "Dutch-erian" after five years in Lagos, says the key to Nigeria's strength lies in the number of players who play in European leagues where they have gained valuable top-level experience.

Striker Rashidi Yekini was top scorer at the African Nations' Cup as well as in the Portuguese league this season with Setubal.

He is quick to acknowledge the difference between the World Cup and African championship, but points to his record in Portugal as proof of his ability on the top stage.

"I don't think I will have any problems, but what you need to win a World Cup is luck. If you have the luck, you are the best," he said.

Spain seek courage for Germany match

LISLE, Ill. (AP) — After letting slip a golden chance of victory against South Korea, the Spanish squad Sunday was working to recharge team morale for Tuesday's crucial game against reigning world champion Germany.

"The key is to play well, with a lot of spirit and enjoyment," said coach Javier Clemente. "We have to play as a unit, a single block, not isolated, that's the key."

"And also not to be frightened, we shouldn't be scared of Germany," Clemente said. "If we lose, well, we lose but we'll do it without fear."

Although a man short owing to the expulsion of captain Miguel Angel Nadal, Spain went 2-0 up in its World Cup opening game against South Korea in Dallas Friday and appeared to have three points in the bag. But with less than seven minutes to go the underdog Asian side zapped in two goals to steal the draw.

The result plunged Spain's morale in the immediate aftermath but Sunday the players appeared to have recuperated.

Spain now plays its second Group C game against Germany in Chicago's Soldier Field. It winds up its first round against Bolivia June 27.

Germany won its opening game against Bolivia 1-0. Clemente highlighted German's midfielder Andreas Moeller as being one of the main players he feared in Tuesday's game.

"Moeller is a vital player for Germany. He's capable of putting his stamp on the game with little difficulty," said the Spanish coach.

Clemente was speaking after a team workout in the Illinois Benedictine College in Lisle, on the outskirts of

Chicago. During the session, a group of local schoolchildren presented the players with a carnation each wishing them luck in this the team's ninth World Cup.

On finishing the training, Clemente's plans received an unexpected setback on bearing the decision by the world soccer body FIFA to suspend Nadal, the squad's anchor man, for two games instead of the customary one because of the red card against South Korea.

"I think it's totally unfair and out of proportion," said Clemente.

It was confirmed, however, that key midfielder Fernando Hierro had recuperated from the muscle injury he suffered against South Korea and would be fit to play.

Tuesday's match will also see the return of Spain's top ranked veteran goalkeeper Andoni Zubizarreta who missed the South Korea game owing to a red card sanction.

None of the players were willing to enter into discussion with Spanish reporters over whether 24-year-old Santiago Canizares, who played superbly Friday, should stay on as the team's no. 1 goalkeeper.

"It's a totally unjust suggestion, we're 22 players and we respect the coaches' decision as to who plays," said Barcelona midfielder Jose Maria Bakero. "I thought I was going to play against Korea but I didn't and there was nothing more to it."

Bakero, however, is reported to be odds on to get his game from the start against Germany in place of youngster Julien Guerrero whom Clemente is said to feel may lack the old-hand experience necessary for this particular match.

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Chang safely through at Wimbledon

LONDON (AFP) — Michael Chang ignored the reputation of Wimbledon's notorious number-two court and came safely through his first round clash on the opening day of the 1994 championships here Monday.

Playing on the outside court, which has earned the nickname 'graveyard of champions' because of the number of upsets there over the years, Chang saw off Alberto of Spain 7-6 (7/2), 6-4, 6-2.

Although many top players dislike playing there because of the proximity of the crowd, Chang revelled in the atmosphere and ran down everything the Spaniard, a clay court specialist, could hit at him.

Chang now plays Australian qualifier Michael Tebbutt who hammered Robbie Weiss of the United States 6-3, 6-0, 6-3.

In the women's singles, South Africa's diminutive 14th seed Amanda Coetzer launched her 1994 campaign with a quick fire straight-sets victory over Elena Likhovtseva of Kazakhstan Monday.

The 5ft 2in (1.57m) 22-year-old, who has never got further than the second

round in four previous visits, ended with a flourish to score a 6-4, 6-0 victory and earn a second-round clash against either Chanda Rubin of the United States or Louise Field of Australia.

Coetzer, playing for the first time since her 1-6, 1-6 loss to the absent Mary Pierce at the recent French Open in Paris, took control in the second-set and kept her opponent constantly wrong-footed with excellent returns and volleys.

Other early first-round winners included Coetzer's compatriot Elna Reinach, Nathalie Tauziat of France and Romanian newcomer Irina Spirlea.

Reinach, 25, won an all-South African battle with junior compatriot Joannette Kruger 7-6 (8/6), 6-3 in a match which produced ten breaks of serve and interminable rallies of sliced forehands. In the fifth game Kruger, 20, had a nasty fall but she was able to play on.

Reinach now plays Tauziat who overwhelmed Asa Carlsson of Sweden 6-2, 6-1.

Spirlea, 20, and described by many top been players as 'the new Steffi Graf,' raced past Britain's Monique Javer



Michael Chang

singles another Australian, Kristine Radford, scored a ruthless 6-0, 6-0 win over Angelica Gavaldon of Mexico.

6-1, 6-2. The hard-hitting Romanian, who has risen 38th in the rankings and who is making her Wimbledon debut, now faces either Australia's Kristine Radford or Angelica Gavaldon of Mexico.

Experienced Australian Mark Woodforde proved too sharp for Japan's Shuzo Matsumoto.

The 28-year-old left-hander from Adelaide, who is playing his ninth Wimbledon, surged into the second-round after scoring a 6-2, 7-5, 6-4 win.

Matsuoka, 26 and a finalist at Queen's in 1992, returned service superbly but made too many errors trying to get down to low balls.

It ended another unhappy visit by the 131st-ranked Japanese player. In five visits he has yet to get past the second-round.

Woodforde now plays Czech Daniel Vacek who defeated Frenchman Gerard Soves 6-4, 6-2, 4-6, 6-6, 6-2 in a five-set thriller.

Woodforde's compatriot John Fitzgerald went out tamer in his first-round clash against eleventh-seed Petr Korda.

Meanwhile in the women's

Death threats caused Pierce to quit Wimbledon

LONDON (AFP) — A series of death threats finally caused French tennis star Mary Pierce to quit Wimbledon — not a fear of losing on grass.

Senior Wimbledon officials confirmed here Monday that the 19-year-old French Open finalist received two calls Friday saying that she would be murdered if she played at the championships.

It was the last straw after a week of intense media pressure in which she was told of rumours that a tabloid newspaper was planning to fly her estranged American-born father and former coach Jim

Pierce to Wimbledon to confront her.

Jim Pierce, 58 and a former convict with a long history of mental instability and disruptive behaviour, is banned from attending all tennis tournaments.

But it had been reported that he was going to attempt to breach security at the All England Club by wearing a disguise.

"Mary was clearly very worried about these calls and they put the seal on what has been a very miserable time for her," said a senior tournament official.

"She decided she could not play under these very unfair and unjust pressures. Whoever made the calls has been callous to the extreme."

The official made it clear that there was no suggestion that the player's father was behind the calls. Mary Pierce, who travels with her French mother Yannick and is currently trained by American coach Nick Bollettieri, had a miserable time at Eastbourne.

Unable to adjust to the fast, grass courts, the Wimbledon seventh seed crashed out to an unknown 15-year-old Czech player in the junior

event, prompting some players to suggest she was using her father as a "smokescreen" and that she was frightened of losing in the Wimbledon first round to compatriot Julie Halard.

Former champion Billie Jean King, winner of 20 Wimbledon titles claimed "most players thought she would withdraw from Wimbledon when they saw the draw."

In the United States Jim Pierce is reported to have denied all suggestions that he was planning to gatecrash the championships.

Korea's campaign to host Cup gets boost

DALLAS, Texas (AFP) — South Korea's dream of becoming the first Asian country to host World Cup received a major boost from their stunning draw with Spain in The Cotton Bowl.

A good showing here is vital if Korea wants to host the 2002 World Cup, and as the team flew out early Saturday for their next Group C match against Bolivia in Boston Tuesday they were brimming with new-found confidence.

Plagued for years by an inability to hold on to a lead or last 90 minutes, the South Koreans finally ended their international nightmare.

Not only did they come back from being two goals down, they grabbed the equaliser in the final minute.

"Perhaps this is the end of our infamous second half problems," said Chung Mong-Joon, president of the Korean Football Association and FIFA's new Asian vice-president.

Chung, a multi-millionaire who controls the world's largest shipyard, is determined to bring the World Cup to South Korea and he made no attempt to hide his delight at their first result.

Rockets beat Knicks 86-84, even NBA's final series 3-3

HOUSTON (AP) — Kenny Smith's horrible series turned terrific with one flick of the wrist that sent a 3-pointer through the hoop and helped the Houston Rockets stay alive in the NBA finals.

His shot with 3:19 left New York fighting back and sparked the rockets to an 86-84 win Sunday night that tied the series 3-3 with game 7 Wednesday night in Houston.

Smith, the starting point guard who had just 25 points in the series to that point, launched his shot from the top of the key. It gave Houston an 84-77 lead.

He was mobbed by his teammates when he returned to the bench as the Knicks called a timeout.

But the Knicks were far from done as John Starks, who had 16 points in the fourth quarter, hit a basket with 1:33 left and a 3-pointer 20 seconds later to make it 84-82. Houston did not score on its next possession, but Hakeem Olajuwon stole a pass by Starks, was fouled and made two free throws with 39 seconds remaining.

Anthony Mason's 12-footer (4-metre shot) with 32 seconds left brought New York back within two and a long jumper by Smith as the shot clock wound down, went in and out.

The Knicks had the ball and a final chance with 7.6 seconds left.

Starks' 3-pointer at the buzzer fell way short and was knocked out of bounds.

Olajuwon had 30 points and 10 rebounds for Houston, while Carl Herrera had 12 points and Smith seven.

Starks finished with 27 points and Patrick Ewing had 17 points and 15 rebounds.

Now Houston has the homecourt advantage that New York seized by winning the previous two games.

Home teams have won the last 19 game 7s. The Rockets, who began the season with 15 straight wins, will be NBA champions if they can end it with two in a row.

Wednesday night's game 7 will be the first in an NBA finals in six years and only the

third in the last 16. The last time it happened, the Los Angeles Lakers overcame a 3-2 deficit by winning two straight at home against Detroit in 1988.

Home teams are 57-11 in all game 7s played in NBA history. But four of the last five championships were clinched on the road.

Houston is 2-1 in seventh games, including a comeback from a 2-0 deficit to Phoenix in this year's Western Conference semifinals. The Knicks won two seventh games this year against Chicago and Indiana and are 6-5 overall.

Trailling 27-36 with 9½ minutes left in the second quarter, the Rockets took control with a 9-0 run and led 46-36 at halftime on 53 per cent shooting.

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WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ	
Q.1—East-West vulnerable, as South you hold: ♠A7 ♠108765 ♠KQ5 ♠KJ2 The bidding has proceeded: North East South West 1 ♠ Pass ? What do you bid now?	Q.4—East-West vulnerable, as South you hold: ♠A753 ♠K6 ♠K9742 ♠4 The bidding has proceeded: West North East South 1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠ ? What action do you take?
Q.2—East-West vulnerable, as South you hold: ♠A7 ♠108765 ♠KQ5 ♠KJ2 The bidding has proceeded: South East North West Pass Pass 1 ♠ Pass What do you bid now?	Q.5—East-West vulnerable, as South you hold: ♠K9742 ♠K6 ♠A753 ♠4 The bidding has proceeded: West North East South 1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠ ? What action do you take?
Q.3—Both vulnerable, as South you hold: ♠A862 ♠J4 ♠A52 ♠Q1083 The bidding has proceeded: North East South West 1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠ Pass 1 NT Pass ? What action do you take?	Q.6—Both vulnerable, as South you hold: ♠A109762 ♠K6 ♠KQ ♠A42 The bidding has proceeded: North East South West 1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠ Pass 4 ♠ Pass ? What action do you take?

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	PHILADELPHIA	PLAZA	CONCORD	AMMOUN THEATRE	Nabil Al Mashini Theatre	AHLAN THEATRE
	JURASSIC PARK Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	Christian Slates in KUFFS Shows: 12:30, 3:15, 5:00, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30	CONCORD '1' DENNIS THE MENACE Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 CONCORD '2' GET AWAY Shows: 12:30, 3:45, 6:00, 8:15, 10:15	Soon the new play!!!	Today & Everyday Abu Awwad in social comedy "PUNCTURED BAG"	Present their play: WHAT A PEACE! (Salam Ya Salam) Daily at 8:30 p.m. The theatre is closed on Tues days.

Bomb blast in Iranian shrine kills 70, injures 114

TEHRAN (Agencies) — A bomb blast ripped through a crowded shrine in the Holy City of Mashhad on Monday killing 70 people and wounding 114, the official news agency IRNA said.

It was the highest number of people killed in a single bomb attack in Iran since the early years of the 1979 Islamic revolution and it was unprecedented for a religious shrine in Iran.

The pilgrims from all over Iran had gathered to commemorate Asburi, the anniversary of death of the third Shiite Muslim leader, Imam Hussein, grandson of the Prophet Mohammad, at the holiest Shiite shrine in the country.

Iran's spiritual guide Ayatollah Ali Khamenei issued a message blaming the main armed opposition group Mujahadeen-e Khalq for the attack, while the government declared Tuesday a day of national mourning. The Mujahadeen denies responsibility for the blast.

IRNA said the Iranians had gathered in the prayer hall of the mausoleum of the Imam Reza.

It was the worst single terrorist atrocity in the country since the 1988 ending of the eight-year Iran-Iraq war.

IRNA said 70 people were killed and 114 rushed to hospitals in the city, 720 kilometres east of Tehran.

It said most of the mourners had come from other parts of Iran to commemorate the anniversary, one of the Shiites' holiest days.

It was not known how many people were in the prayer hall when the bomb exploded.

The agency said it received a call from a man who called himself a spokesman for the Mujahadeen and claimed re-

sponsibility for the bombing. The agency said the caller was meant to avenge the death of the "martyrs of the June 20th uprising," the date in 1981 when the Mujahadeen began its campaign against the government.

But in a statement issued from its office in France, a Mujahadeen spokesman "strongly condemned" the bombing. "Such criminal actions, which inflict casualties on innocent people, only serve the interests of the mullahs' regime," the spokesman said.

Several small bombs have exploded in Tehran in recent months and authorities have blamed Iraq, its enemy in the 1980-88 war, and the Mujahadeen, which is based in Iran.

On June 1, Intelligence Minister Ali Fallahian claimed that his security men had smashed a network of saboteurs that was masterminded by two Iraqi army officers.

He claimed that it was the eighth such underground cell broken in four months.

Ayatollah Khamenei called on security officials to "thoroughly investigate the incident and bring those responsible for the attack to justice immediately."

Rescuers rushed to the scene and helped take the wounded, including seven who had serious injuries, to hospitals in Mashhad. The casualties included many women and children.

The opposition National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI) also condemned the attack in a statement received in Nicosia. The Paris-based council is mainly comprised of the Mujahadeen.

Mashhad, Iran's second largest city and home to a large number of Afghan re-

fugees, has been a focus of tension in the past two years.

On April 22, a gunman shot and wounded a Muslim prayer leader at a mosque in Mashhad in the first such attack on an imam during a religious service in Iran.

Hojatoleslam Abol Khorasani is one of the most influential religious leaders in Mashhad. Iran blamed the Mujahadeen for the attack.

The police said in March that it had arrested 100 "bonglans" and "trouble-makers" in a crackdown on social corruption, but gave no details.

Mashhad was the scene of riots in May 1992, during which hundreds of government buildings and shops were looted or set on fire.

Official figures said 300 people were arrested and four of the main culprits executed in connection with the incident.

There have also been tension between the Sunni Muslim and Shiite Muslim communities in the past months over the destruction by the municipality of a Sunni mosque in Mashhad to make way for developmental projects, according to informed sources.

Earlier on Monday, tens of thousands of bystanders crowded the streets of Tehran to watch religious parades marking Ashura.

Parades marking Ashura had been low-key this year in marked contrast to the self-inflicted blood-letting and flagellation which had characterised previous processions.

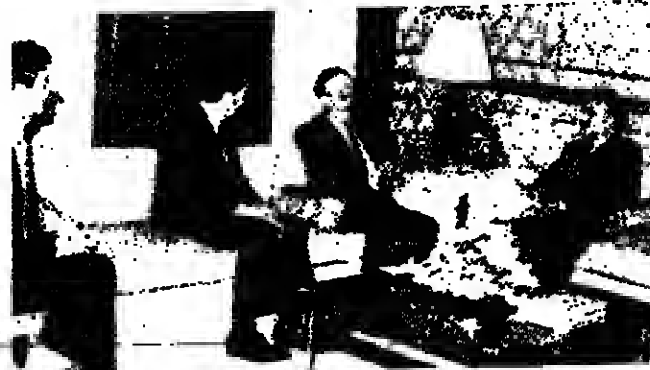
Ayatollah Khamenei last week criticised the practice of head-slashing, known as "qameh-zani," saying it was an "evil and wrong custom" and it was banned by Iranian authorities.

Regent: Final settlement should be land in exchange for peace

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, on Monday reaffirmed Jordan's keenness on reaching a just and comprehensive peace on the basis of U.N. Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.

Speaking at a meeting held at the Royal Court with a visiting delegation led by Andrew Greene, under-secretary at the British Foreign Office (see photo), the Regent stressed that a final settlement should be based on the concept of exchanging land for peace.

Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Talal Al Hassan, who attended the meeting, said the Regent reiterated the



Kingdom's commitment to the peace process in line with international legitimacy to achieve a comprehensive settlement.

The Regent also outlined His Majesty King Hussein's efforts towards a just peace that would ensure security and stability for the whole region, the minister said.

The minister said that issues pertaining to Anglo-Jordanian ties were also reviewed at the meeting.

Families head for West Bank to visit Palestinian detainees

By Mariam M. Shahin
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Two busloads of men, women and children headed for the West Bank on Monday for a two-day visit to imprisoned sons, fathers, brothers and husbands.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) arranged for the visit of 85 relatives of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails. The visit is the third of its kind in three years.

ICRC spokesman in Amman Mouin Kassis told the Jordan Times as he saw off the visitors at the ICRC headquarters in Shmeisani. Sixty-six adults and 19 children boarded two buses after days of negotiations carried out by ICRC officials in Amman and occupied Jerusalem.

The visiting relatives do not have West Bank identity cards and have no visitation rights to the occupied territories.

"Only the category of people who could benefit most from this trip was chosen," said Mr. Kassis.

"These people have no legal means of visiting the occupied territories other than through us," he said.

The imprisoned relatives are held in ten prisons where most of the 5,500 Palestinian prisoners are held by Israel.

The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) has demanded that all Palestinian political prisoners be released by Israel. Nabil Shaath, a member of the Palestinian National Authority, recently said that the release of those prisoners was the "number one priority" for the new Palestinian self-rule government.

Relatives of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails who

live in other Arab countries such as Lebanon, Syria and Iraq have not visitation rights, Mr. Kassis said.

"Only families living in Jordan have obtained these visitation rights so far through us," he said.

Most of the prisoners being released by Israel in the last weeks are being forced to live in the Jericho and Gaza self-rule enclaves and Israel has not allowed them to return to their homes in other parts of the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem.

Saeed Erekat, the local government minister in the Palestinian authority, protested last week to the Israelis about what he called a violation of the PLO-Israeli agreement.

Jordan to help education sector

(Continued from page 1)

states. "Unless we do that, we would not be able to cope with the Israeli challenge, especially in the wake of a 27-year occupation period during which Israeli hegemony was imposed on the Palestinian people in various economic and social sectors," he said.

"We are in need of Jordan's backing and of learning from its expertise in all domains."

After the Higher Education Council resumed its meeting, Prince Hassan reviewed the main features that characterised efforts exerted since 1986 to develop higher education. He said these efforts resulted in the formation of a higher education policy working group and 45 specialised committees and other sub-committees which have held many meetings and prepared many reports.

He noted that the most important issues in this regard are the new structure of

secondary education, the vertical links with universities, developing community colleges and curricula and supporting universities.

Prince Hassan said the rise in unemployment among community college graduates testify to the absence of comprehensive planning, warranting a review of community colleges' curricula and programmes and urging an update to their role to make it fit the needs of the local society.

The Regent said the number of students at government universities has reached this year 50,000, adding that this tangible expansion in higher education created an imbalance between the number of graduating students and the available job opportunities.

The Crown Prince said Jordan's experience in opening private universities requires monitoring their performance.

Chopra: High Jordanian potential

(Continued from page 1)

directly refer to the circulation of the dinar in the occupied territories, the issue was raised during a meeting he had with the Finance Committee of the Lower House of Parliament on Monday.

Abdul Karim Kabariti, an Aqaba deputy and member of the committee, said he called on Mr. Chopra to help Jordan maintain the stability of the dinar, assist it secure debt relief and extend assistance to the Kingdom to plug its budgetary deficits for a period of 10 years.

"We expressed appreciation of the role of the World Bank," Mr. Kabariti told the Jordan Times. "Most members of the Financial Committee share that view despite the sensitivities about the perceived role of the World Bank and trust the advice and recommendations the bank gives to Jordan," he said.

Mr. Kabariti said he also expressed appreciation for the personal involvement of Mr. Chopra in "helping Jordan get out of the current situation to a better one that will put an end to the state of depression that some segments of the society are living in."

"A balance has to be created between our ambitions and sacrifices and our foreign debts," Mr. Kabariti said he told Mr. Chopra.

Any peace in the region would not be complete without realistic improvements in the life of the people, he said. "We in Jordan believe that peace is a strategic choice, an objective and a political

priority," he said. "But it is unjust for the world to expect us to accept all that is offered and discussed if these are not related to Jordan's real resources and a comprehensive social perspective of the Kingdom."

There was an implicit reference to World Bank recommendations that structural reforms, including upward revision of tariffs be introduced in the water and energy sector.

Mr. Kabariti said he made three specific proposals to the World Bank. These were:

— Setting up a \$700 million fund to help Jordan maintain the stability of the dinar and protect the currency against any effort to weaken it in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and making the dinar the official currency of the Palestinians, if that could be agreed upon, without affecting the exchange rate value of the currency.

— Full or partial write-off of Jordan's debts to ensure that the ratio between the debts and the gross domestic product is "reasonable under international standards."

— Aid to Jordan amounting to 51 per cent of its annual budget for the next 10 years.

Realisation of these proposals, along with the economic restructuring programme, could help Jordan move on to a new era of growth and prosperity," Mr. Kabariti said.

It was not immediately known how Mr. Chopra responded to the call.

Israeli troops harass Shaath

(Continued from page 1)

were "internal Palestinian reasons." The planned visit angered right-wing Israelis who staged protests.

Dr. Shaath had announced a "purely personal visit" to East Jerusalem.

He admitted that Israel, which wants to ban all aspects of self-rule from the Holy City, had interfered.

The new Palestinian "minister" of international cooperation and planning said he hoped to tour Jerusalem next week.

"There is a need for security coordination and they said my visit would complicate that," Mr. Shaath told reporters.

"They told me about their security plans and let me decide to go or not. I need to go to Gaza and I asked to postpone the visit."

However, Dr. Shaath spent the day in Jericho and left only well into the afternoon, taking a detour to avoid Jerusalem.

Then he faced on ordeal as the Israeli army denied him passage at a checkpoint. Dr. Shaath had to return to Jericho and contacted Amnon Shahak, Israel's deputy chief of staff.

"Someone irresponsible thought of stopping me," Dr. Shaath said. "This is totally unacceptable. They have no right to stop us between Jericho and Oujah or between Jericho and the West Bank."

Clinton cautious

(Continued from page 1)

and South Korea, and he also spoke with Mr. Clinton by telephone on his talks in Pyongyang with President Kim Il-Sung.

Assistant Secretary of State Robert Gallucci said after Mr. Carter's White House visit that he had reported on the interest of the North Korean leadership in freezing all activity that produces fuel for nuclear weapons and allowing continued international monitoring of its nuclear facilities.

North Korea in turn wants a resumption of talks with the United States and others on establishing normal diplomatic and economic relations, as well as an immediate end to U.S. efforts to bring international sanctions to bear on Pyongyang over the nuclear issue.

Mr. Carter made clear he thought the U.S. sanctions effort should be dropped and said he thought "the crisis is over."

British society honours Prince Hassan

AMMAN (I.T.) — The Royal Geographical Society of Britain (RGS) has conferred its highest award to His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan.

Honorary Membership was conferred on the Crown Prince at the society's awards and medals ceremony on June 13 by the society's president, Lord Jellicoe.

Dr. Hani Mulk, secretary general of the Higher Council for Science and Technology collected the "Royal Scroll" when visiting the society on June 17 to take it to the Crown Prince personally.

Honorary Membership award is given to "mark outstanding services to public life and to international affairs that merit recognition by the society." Recent recipients of this accolade include the Prince of Wales and Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn of Thailand.

A press release issued by the Jordan Information Bureau in London said:

The Crown Prince has a strong personal commitment to environmental conservation. Among many other activities, he founded the Royal Scientific Society and the Higher Council for Science and Technology. He has stressed conservation in four different national development plans that he chaired.

In particular, a speech by the Crown Prince to the United Nations General Assembly led to his founding the Independent Commission on International Humanitarian Issues, many of whose reports have been on geographical themes. He was deeply involved in Jordan's planning for the Rio Earth Summit and has stressed sustainable development in the Middle East peace process and other international fora.

Crown Prince Hassan is closely involved with the Royal Geographical Society, since he invited RGS scientists to join Jordanian colleagues in the Jordan Badia Research and Development Programme, which is currently in the field in the desert in eastern Jordan.

Dr. Shaath said that he was deeply involved in Jordan's planning for the Rio Earth Summit and has stressed sustainable development in the Middle East peace process and other international fora.

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Philip Morris chairman bows out

NEW YORK (AFP) — Tobacco giant Philip Morris' chairman and chief executive, Michael Miles, has stepped down after three years in the post. Mr. Miles said he believed it was time for a "career Philip Morris executive in the top job."

He previously served as president and chief operating officer at Kraft General Foods. Philip Morris, which has food and tobacco operations, said Mr. Miles' resignation was accepted Saturday by Citicorp Chairman John Reed, chairman of the Philip Morris Board's Compensation Committee. The company said in a statement Sunday that its board had named Vice Chairman R. William Murray as chairman, and vice chairman and board member Geoffrey Bible as president and chief executive. "I leave with full confidence that the difficult decisions made over the past two years will be proven right by our results in 1994 and beyond," Mr. Miles said in a company statement. "Now, however, with the resurgence of our U.S. tobacco business, and the continued strong growth in international tobacco, it makes sense to again have a career Philip Morris executive in the top job," he said.

3 Germans in shooting incident in Thailand

BANGKOK (AFP) — A German businessman has been charged with the murder of a German business partner and the wounding of a second one on the Thai resort island of Ko Samui, police said Monday.

Police on the island, reached by telephone, said that Harry Juxer, 50, had shot dead Jakob Hurter, 59, in an argument over money at their restaurant on Lamai Beach Sunday morning. He then shot and wounded another partner, Bokard Katz, 35 before turning the gun on himself in a suicide attempt, police said.

The German embassy in Bangkok confirmed the incident but said it would not identify those involved pending notification of next of kin. Both Juxer and Katz were in serious condition, police said. A hospital official in Surat Thani, where Juxer was transferred, said he remained unconscious with a bullet wound in the head.

Thais burn 1,500 kilos of confiscated drugs

BANGKOK (AFP) — Thai authorities Monday burned 1,589 kilos (3,495 pounds) of illegal drugs confiscated in the past year to demonstrate their determination to suppress narcotics. The burning ceremony, on the grounds of a police school in central Bangkok, "illustrates that the Thai government does not intend to resell these narcotic drugs," a statement from the Narcotics Control Division said. It was the 16th such burning ceremony since August 1977, for a total of more than 31,000 kilos (68,000 pounds) of illicit drugs. The drugs destroyed Monday included 733 kilos (1,612 pounds) of heroin, 117 kilos (257 pounds) of morphine, 115 kilos (253 pounds) of opium, 65 kilos (143 pounds) of marijuana and 14 kilos (30 pounds) of cocaine and codeine — all seized by police in the last year. Another 541 kilos (1,190 pounds) of marijuana seized by the Office of Narcotics Control Board were also burned.

Ten tonnes of marijuana seized in Netherlands

ROTTERDAM, Netherlands (AFP) — Dutch police seized 10 tonnes of marijuana from a jeans-filled container and arrested three people including a 41-year-old Briton, a police statement said Sunday. The marijuana, with a street value of about \$16 million, was burnt as soon as it had been seized, police said. The identities of the Briton and the Dutchmen aged 30 and 56 were not released, in accordance with Dutch tradition. The container had been picked out Friday night by Dutch customs during a routine check in Rotterdam port.

Algeria's ruling party, fighting over an overthrow, set up anti-state forces and urged the public to be vigilant against the government. The state radio monitored in Algeria said the public should be suspicious of

NEWS IN BRIEF

Israel spends \$10m on upgrading crossings

KING HUSSEIN BRIDGE (AFP) — Israel is investing \$10 million to improve facilities at the border crossings from Jordan and Egypt to the occupied territories. Transport Minister Yisrael Kessar said Monday. "We are expecting more than one million passengers this year compared with 350,000 last year," Mr. Kessar told reporters on a tour of this bridge crossing outside Jericho. The work, which included electronic scanners and one-way mirrors, will modernise the facilities ready for joint control of the terminals with the Palestinians in line with the autonomy agreement. It was due to be completed by the middle of next month. Major-General Danny Rothschild, Israel's coordinator for the occupied territories, said the Palestinians could take up their positions as soon as they are ready, but only in the terminal not on the bridge, which marks the border. "As far as the bridge is concerned the Israeli Defence Forces will be responsible," he said. The border crossing at Rafah links the Gaza Strip with Egypt.

Palestinians publish self-rule newspaper

JERICHO (R) — The Palestinian self-rule authority has begun publishing a newspaper, an official in Jericho said on Monday. The first issue of Al Awa, or "The Return," featured the Palestinian eagle and a picture of Yasser Arafat at the top of the front page. "A warm welcome awaits the arrival of the leader and figurehead," read the lead story's report on preparations for Mr. Arafat's return. Senior adviser Nabil Shaath said on Sunday that Mr. Arafat will visit the Palestinian self-rule areas this month. The eight-page newspaper focused heavily on other Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) officials and included a poem for a young man killed during the uprising against Israeli rule. "It is important for every national authority to have a newspaper. Every government must have a newspaper," said Mohammad Shaker, head of the Palestinian information department in the Jericho self-rule enclave that produces the weekly. He said the first edition last Friday ran to 1,000 copies which were handed out free to Palestinian police in Jericho. Next month, the authority would start charging one Israeli shekel per copy and hoped to distribute in the Gaza Strip as well, Mr. Shaker said.

Two killed in Iran earthquake

TEHRAN (AFP) — Two people were killed and 50 others injured when an earthquake measuring 6.1 on the Richter scale rocked southern Iran on Monday, Tehran Radio reported. The earthquake hit regions in the southwestern Fars province which borders the Gulf, it said. The casualties occurred in Meymand, 110 kilometres south of the city of Shiraz, the official news agency IRNA said. The quake also caused a landslide in the Zanjan mountain, 90 kilometres south of Shiraz, blocking a tunnel on a road between Shiraz and Firuzabad. IRNA said. Rescuers immediately rushed to the scene. An earthquake measuring 5.4 on the Richter scale hit the same region on June 11, but only caused damage.

Ugglas urges Palestinians to lead Arabs to democracy

STOCKHOLM (AFP) — Swedish Foreign Minister Margareta Af Ugglas urged Palestinians to lead the way towards democracy in the Arab World, addressing the Palestinian Commission for Citizens' Rights as she opened a three-day human rights seminar in Stockholm Monday. "You Palestinians now have the chance to lead the way in the Arab World towards a society built on democracy and respect for individuals' rights," Ms. Af Ugglas said. "There are too few democratic institutions in the Arab World today, with the exception of a few hopeful signs, such as Jordan," she added. The Palestinian rights organisation, the creation of which was announced on June 8, is chaired by former Palestinian spokeswoman Hanan Ashrawi. "Free, general and democratic elections are a fundamental step towards the establishment of such a society. Therefore, it is the Swedish government's hope that an election of the Palestinian Council be held as soon as possible," Ms. Af Ugglas said. "It is also important that the Palestinian leadership respect the fundamental principles of insight, responsibility and efficiency." The foreign minister also applauded Dr. Ashrawi's initiative in building the independent commission, and reiterated Sweden's commitment to improving the standard of living of the Palestinian people.

NATO, Russia close to agreement on new ties

BRUSSELS (R) — The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and Russia, overcoming recent disputes over key European security issues, are close to a final agreement on their future relationship following weekend talks in Brussels, alliance sources said on Monday.

The sources told Reuters the two sides would probably complete a joint declaration later on Monday which would be issued when Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev signs NATO's Partnership for Peace scheme on Wednesday.

Moscow, complaining that the West ignored its views on issues such as Bosnia, had been pressing for special political ties with NATO beyond the partnership scheme to reflect its status as a major world power.

But diplomats said Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Vitaly Churkin had shown great flexibility in talks on Saturday at NATO headquarters and that the alliance had managed to retain most of what it wanted in the declaration.

"Essentially, the Russians have backed off on some of their demands and accepted that NATO has to put certain very clear limits on the relationship," said one alliance diplomat.

Mr. Churkin, arriving for more talks at NATO, appeared confident that agreement was close. Asked whether he thought the joint declaration could be finalised on Monday, he told reporters: "Sure. Of course I am."

The short political declaration recognises that Russia has a particular weight in Europe and lays out general principles of the relationship between NATO and Moscow.

Moscow had asked for formal consultations with the alliance on security issues but NATO has set clear limits, insisting that it cannot give Russia any right to call talks or any influence over its decisions.

The joint statement — based on a one-page draft prepared by NATO — pledges that relations between the alliance and Russia will develop over time, but only on an informal basis.